TRUE WEST

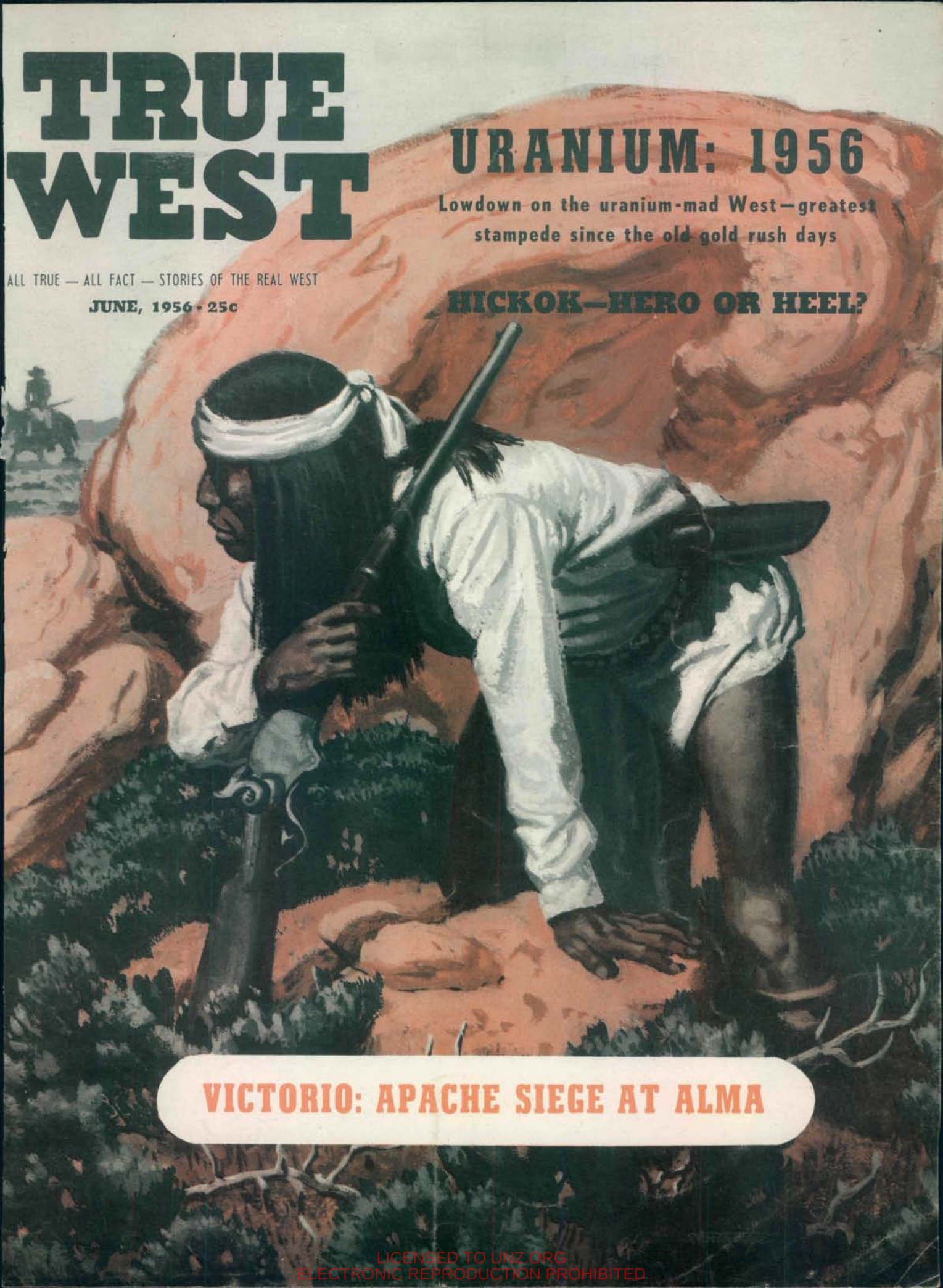
ALL TRUE — ALL FACT — STORIES OF THE REAL WEST

JUNE, 1956 - 25c

URANIUM: 1956

Lowdown on the uranium-mad West—greatest stampede since the old gold rush days

HICKOK—HERO OR HEEL?



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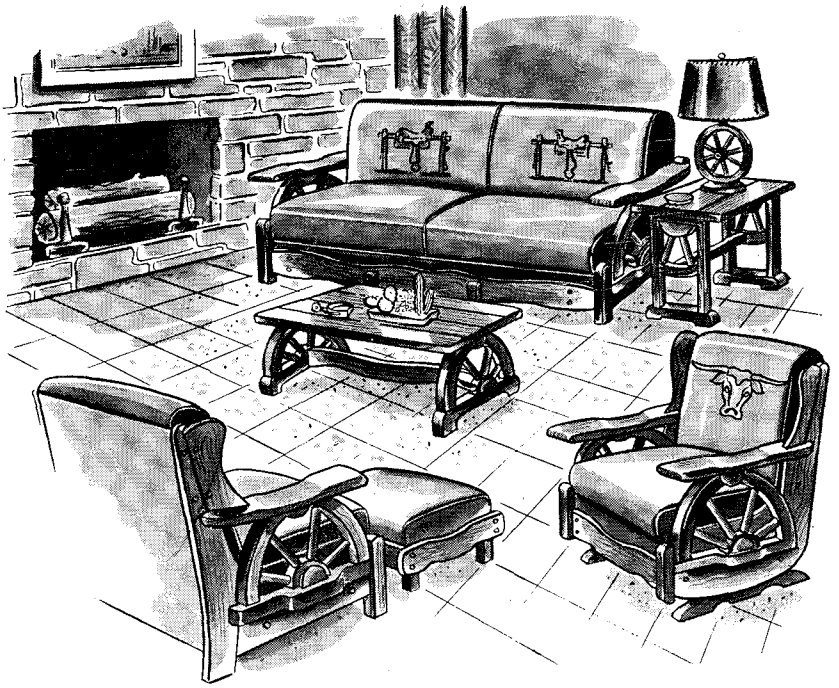

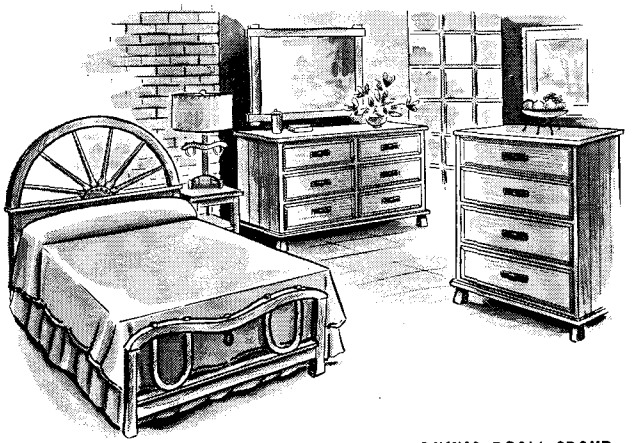

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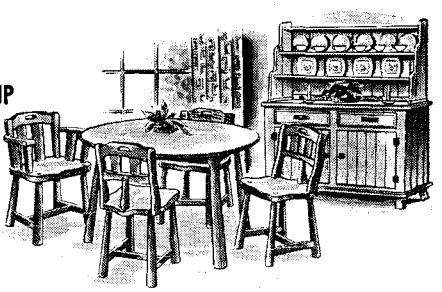

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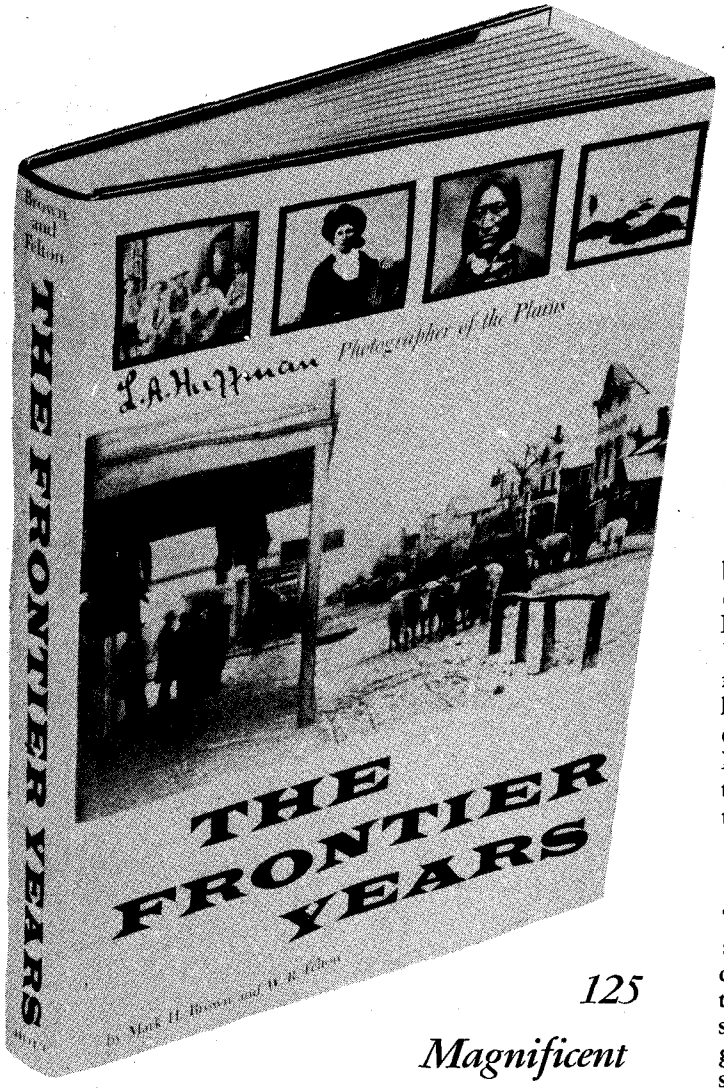

THE FRONTIER YEARS: L.A. Huffman

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Coming Up!

FOR a long spell now we've been amused and yet sort of riled at the popular notion of old-time cowboys, as conveyed by TV shows, radio programs, and movies. So we got Jack Davis, the noted cartoonist, to give us HIS illustrated version of what a cowboy REALLY was, as opposed to the present-day conception. You'll find it in the next issue—and you might just be a little surprised by it.

Second spot in the line-up will be held by Captain George J. Rawlins' "Camelus Americana," which we were compelled to omit from the last issue due to a schedule mix-up. Everything we said about it before in this column still goes. The story of the Army's experiment with a camel freight service in the Southwest, before the Civil War, ranks high on the list of strange and fascinating true stories of the Old West.

Dick Hayman's "Beauty and the Bulls" is the incredible text-and-picture story of three pretty Texas gals who are currently making their marks as successful lady bullfighters in Mexico. El Toro never had it so good—if he HAS to die to provide entertainment for the crowd, death must be less painful under such delightful circumstances!

"Flagstaff Pow-wow" is second in the series of travel sketches by Editor Fred Gipson on his recent trip through the West, accompanied by his family. Fred writes of a big annual gathering of Indians at Flagstaff, Arizona, in that warmly human yet keenly perceptive style that thousands of readers all over the world have come to love.

Like aces back-to-back in a poker game, next comes J. Frank Dobie's vivid tale of old-time Texas, "A Ranch on the Nueces." You've read Mr. Dobie's colorful yarns before, so you know what to expect from him in the way of reading enjoyment. You won't be disappointed.

Norm Wiltsey, our writin' Research Editor, advances an interesting and challenging theory in his article on gunman Clay Allison. It is Norm's contention that many of the famous gun-slingers were really psychopaths—or, as the old-timers put it, "a mite teched." In "Laughing Killer," Clay Allison is cited as proof of the theory.

DID you know that a certain tribe of North American Indians were actually head-hunters? We didn't either until we read Donald H. Clark's article, "Head-hunting Was Their Hobby." Seems that a century ago, the Haida tribe, who lived near Puget Sound, had a quaint habit of collecting a white man's head for every Indian killed by the whites. Business was right good until they encountered the U. S. Navy.

Short articles include Jim Allison's "Hermit's Gold," a fascinating yarn of a man who lived his entire life as many of us have dreamed of living. Golden friendships, golden sunsets, golden aspens in the fall—and enough gold from the bountiful earth to support him in comfort all his days. Believe us, Amigos, we were dissatisfied with our humdrum lives for a week after we read "Hermit's Gold!"

Curt Bishop returns with a story of the last great cattle roundup; and Nevada Dick's article, "Horse Thief," relates the amazing story of a modern rustler gang that operated in Nevada in 1934 as contrasted with the technique of horse-thieves back in the 1870's and 80's.

Then, of course, there is your own department, TRULY WESTERN—the one indispensable feature of TRUE WEST. The Old Bookaroos cut sign on some interesting Western books; and all in all, we think you'll agree that the next issue offers full value for your two-bit piece.

See you later, Podner . . .

May-June, 1956
Volume 3 No. 5
Whole No. 15

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

JOE AUSTELL SMALL
Publisher

FRED GIPSON
Editor

NORMAN B. WILTSEY
Research Editor

ANGEL LESHIKAR
Advertising Manager

DR. WALTER P. WEBB
Historical Consultant

ELIZABETH SMALL
Circulation Manager

GLORIA CURD
Advertising

GAYLE TERBAY
Circulation

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A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

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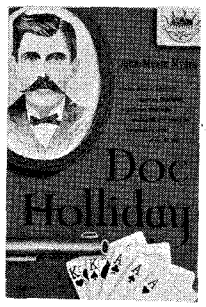

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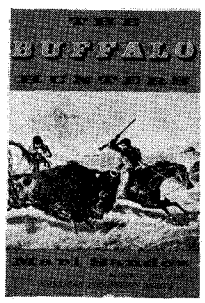

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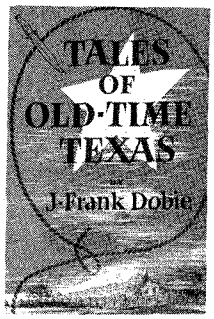

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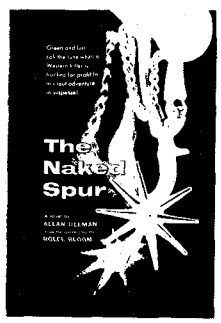

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HUNTING AND FISHING IN TEXAS by Hart Stilwell. In this book the author gives a picture of what you can shoot and what you can hook in the Texas regions, and tells when, where, and how to do it. **$5.00**

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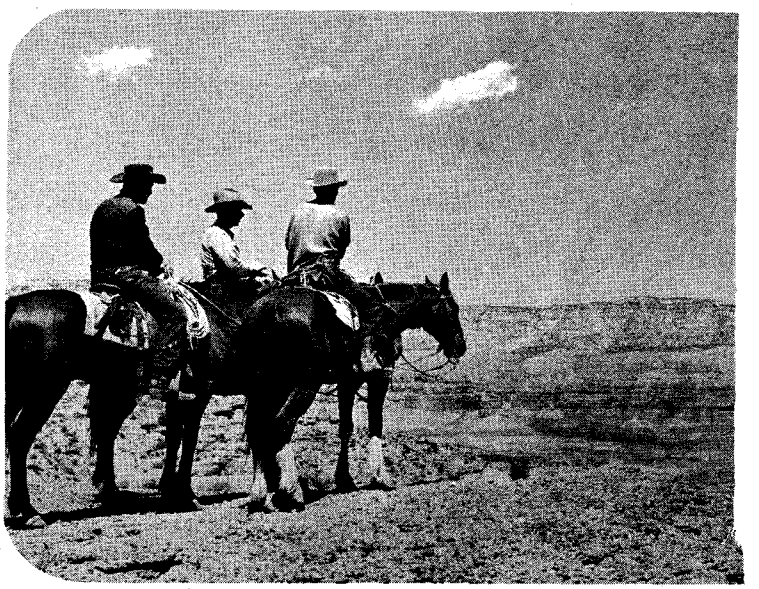
URANIUM: 1956

The world has gone uranium crazy. Here is the low-down on the bonanza: how to find it, where to dig for ore, what it will cost and your chances of striking it lucky.

PHOTOS BY DARRELL PORTER

From Real Adventure



Looking out over Little Red Canyon.

WEST of the Continental Divide, the most fabulous buried treasure of all time lies scattered and unclaimed, free for the taking. In countless thousands of crevices and pockets of rock, disguised in many shapes and colors—gaudy yellow powder, greenish crystals, or black coal-like lumps—it's all the same thing: Uranium.

The raw material of the A-bomb and H-bomb, and the fuel that will power our rocket ships, heat our homes, and run our cooking ranges for the next 10,000 years, is a chemically active, "water-washed" metal. You can't pan pure nuggets of uranium out of a stream the way you can gold. It's mixed with other minerals in complicated ores, dissolved in the waters of ancient seas, and left on the western slope of the Rockies in the form of mud washed down from a "mother lode." The mother lode is the central source of all the deposits —the place where the uranium was first belched up from the molten interior of the earth eons ago, where it began dissolving and spreading.

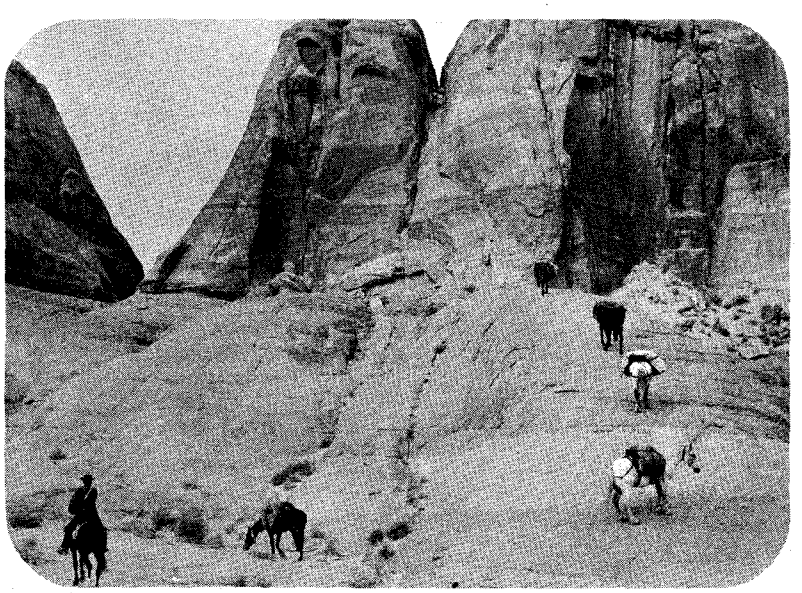
In the last four years, a few men have made millions of dollars by finding just a few outlying traces of this primeval wash. Charlie Steen, a down-at-the-heels geologist from Texas, decided he liked the adventure of uranium hunting better than the steady job he could have had with an oil company. He was down to his last few bucks on the summer day in 1952 when he found a uranium deposit—and discovered that he was worth $150,000,000. Vernon Pick closed down his electrical shop in Minneapolis when business went bad, and took his wife and kids to California to make a new start. On the way west, he stopped off in Utah to have a try at uranium prospecting. He sat down to rest one day near a pile of rocks —did a doubletake when he looked at his Geiger counter— and sold the rocks to a Wall Street financier for nine million dollars and a private airplane.

A constant, growing stream of other people are still looking. People are quitting their jobs, packing up their belongings, and coming to prospect for uranium the way the '49ers lit out for California. The sourdoughs made it "Klondike or bust." For most of the uranium hunters, like the old-time gold rushers, it's bust. Most of them get nothing out of it but the adventure; they go back home poorer than when they came. Only a handful out of 10,000 have gone away richer than they were originally.

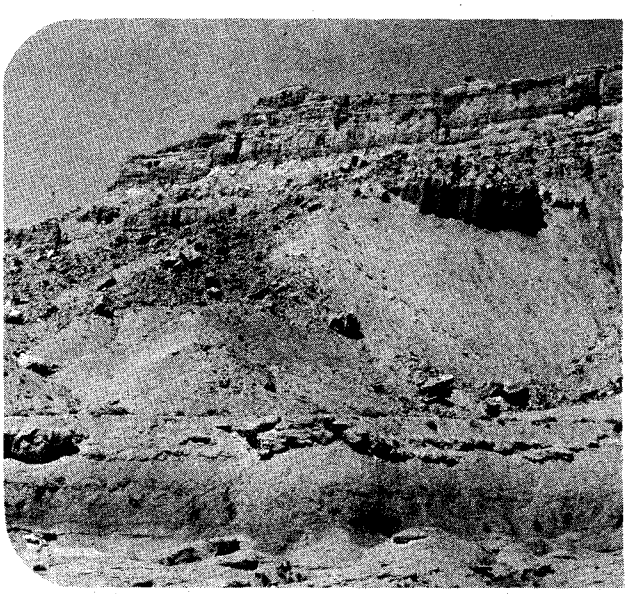
But nobody (yet) has found the mother lode. This is the key—the cornucopia that spills out a flood richer than gold, richer than all the diamonds of Golconda. The man who finds this will be worth a hundred Charlie Steens. He'll be wealthier than all the Texas oilmen and all the Wall Street financiers rolled up in a wad. He will be a multi-billionaire.

NOBODY has a definite idea of where the mother lode might be—there's a lot more uranium than there is gold or silver. Nature also made uranium radioactive, so its presence can be detected with a Geiger counter, even though it is unseen. All this should make it easy to locate. But there's a catch.

Up the slick rock and through the slit.



A bank of radio-active ore—low-grade.



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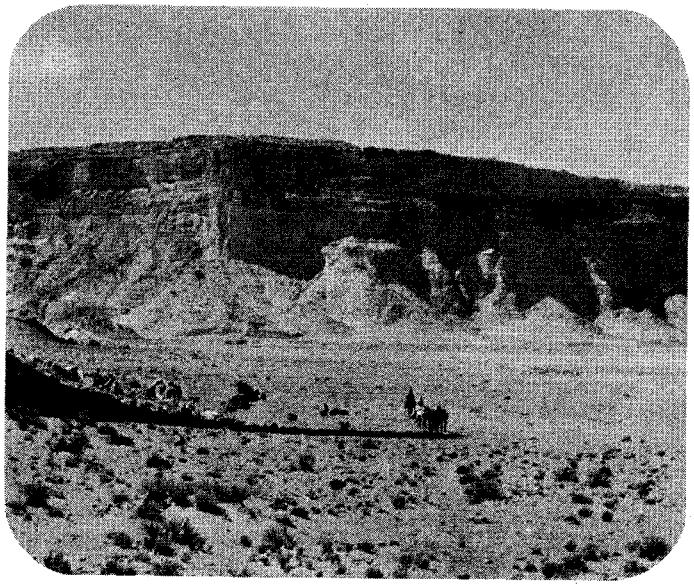


Nearing the Colorado River.

Typical uranium country.

The catch is that uranium is so widely scattered over (or under) the landscape that there are only certain places where it's concentrated enough to be worth digging for. There's no way of telling for sure where these concentrated underground deposits lie—even a Geiger counter can't show it, since anything more than a foot or so of rock or earth covering a deposit will block off the telltale radiations. Prospectors have to look for outcrops, or places where the uranium ore has been exposed by wind and rain wearing away the rock-and-dirt overburden.

This boils down to the fact that finding uranium is always a long-shot proposition. Nobody knows exactly where to look, and you have to get up close to a good deposit with a Geiger counter before you even know it's there. In a territory the size of the uranium country—maybe one-quarter of the area of the entire United States of America, there are an awful lot of rocks to get close to. The only practical way to find uranium in this situation is to turn thousands of men loose with Geiger counters in the hope that one or two will stumble on something.

Uranium hunting is a job that has to be done individually; it's a job cut out for the small-time shoestring operator, for the amateur prospector who's got the guts to buck the long odds with his last few bucks. Uranium is the one last treasure in the earth that's left for the little guy.

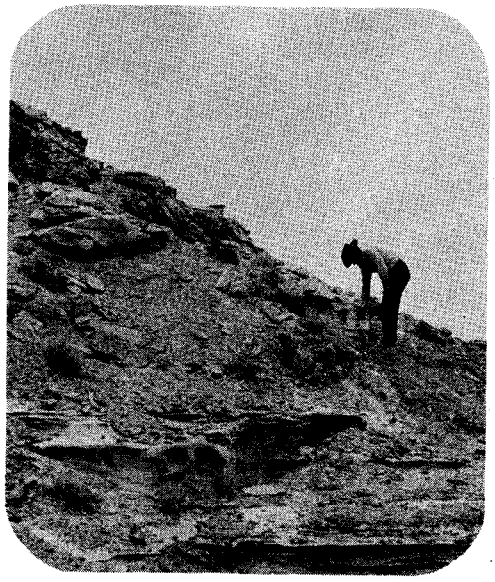
That's the real reason for the Great Uranium Rush. It doesn't take a lot of capital or scientific knowledge to make a fortune in uranium—just guts and huge luck. A man who's never been west of the Hudson River can go prospecting for uranium and become a Charlie Steen. Someday, somewhere in the vast expanse west of the Rockies, a retired grocer may find the mother lode. On the other hand, it might be a file clerk who yearned for outdoor adventure, or a dentist who couldn't look another patient in the mouth.

The Atomic Energy Commission started thinking about grocers and dentists who might want to go prospecting as soon as it realized, in 1950, that it needed a lot more uranium than was available in the U.S. at the time. The Korean War had put a premium on uranium for the atomic weapons program, and this was when the current boom really began.

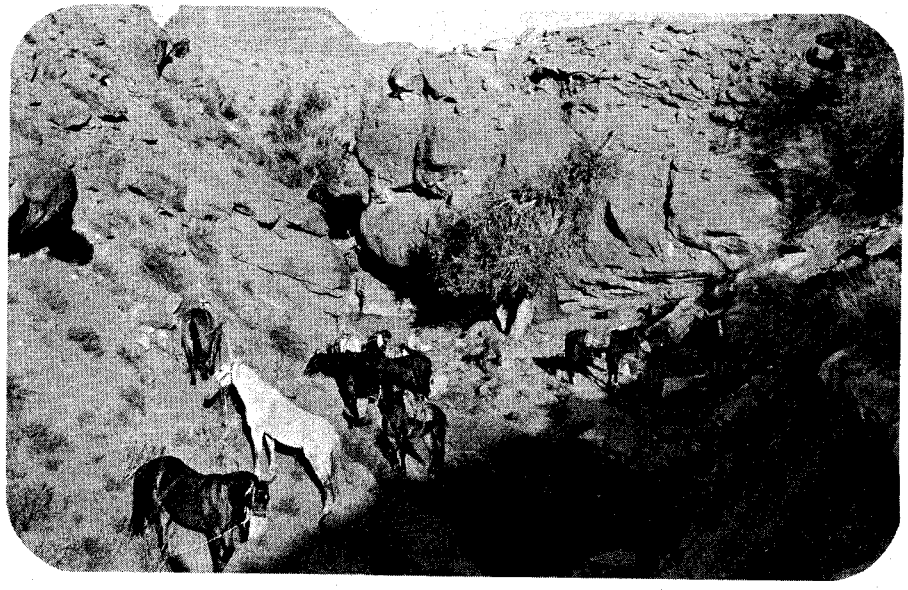
The A.E.C. guaranteed to pay, until March, 1962, $3.50 for each pound of uranium oxide contained in ore of acceptable quality. It also established a firm corner on the market—then, as now, the A.E.C. is the only customer for uranium. A few mining firms have been licensed to buy or mine ore and refine it for A.E.C. use; the A.E.C., in turn, puts it through various hush-hush processes and distributes radioactive materials for use in medicine or industry. But the point is that the A.E.C. is involved in every deal and knows where every gamma ray is coming from.

TO encourage prospectors, who must start the whole chain reaction, the A.E.C. tries to furnish any information the uranium seeker may need. A handbook, "Prospecting for

The right formation, but the Geiger counter shows little activity.



Overnight camp at a dry water-hole.



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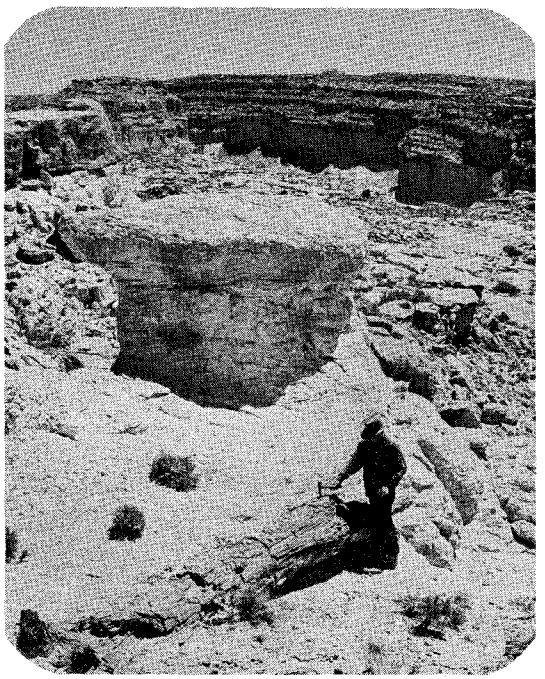
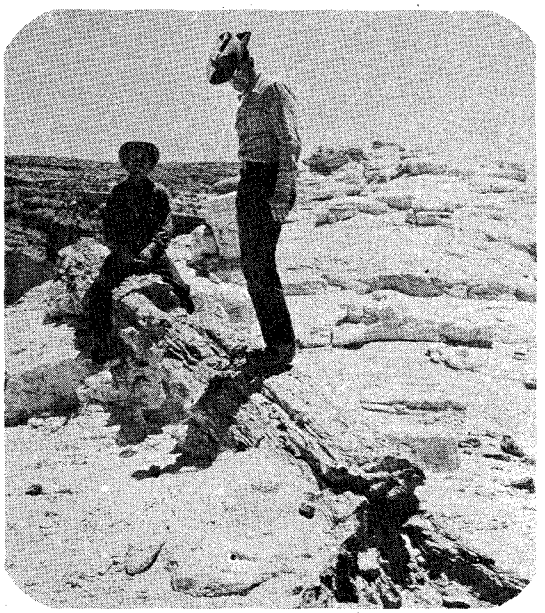


Picking away on a petrified tree, one among a forest of over one hundred.



Uranium," has already been published, and is available at the Government Printing Office for 55c. Maps are supplied for any area a prospector wants to look into. The A.E.C. happily answers any inquiries, including the one from a prospective adventurer in Hollywood who began his letter with a question:

"I have just purchased a Geiger counter, jeep, and pith helmet. What do I do next?"

And ended it with an offer:

"My mother-in-law recently was subjected to intensive radiation treatments. She's cured now, but she gets a definite 'ping' from my counter. Now here is what I'd like to know—how much will you offer for her? I am certain that you could grind her up and make a bomb that would make Hiroshima look like a firecracker."

Irradiated mothers-in-law are of little use, of course, except for running advance Geiger-counter tests. Pith helments are entirely a matter of taste. A jeep is always useful, although there comes a time in every prospector's day when he has to get out and walk. The Geiger counter, the gadget that makes uranium prospecting different and more fascinating than any other kind of treasure hunt, is essential. Counters can be obtained from a number of manufacturers for anywhere from $30 to $500. Basically, every counter consists of an electronic tube which picks up gamma rays emitted by uranium and converts them into electrical impulses which are registered by a clicking sound and by an indicator dial. The tube is enclosed in a metal cylinder called a probe, which the prospector holds near rocks to test them for radioactivity, and the probe is wired to a carrying case containing the batteries. (Another instrument, the scintillation counter, performs the same functions as the Geiger counter but more expensively, retailing for a little under $1,000.)

Besides his counter, the prospector needs a pocket surveyor's compass, maps, a miner's pick, some standard uranium samples for comparison purposes, and a few chemicals used in making simple identification tests. (Everything that's "hot"—i.e., radioactive—is not necessarily uranium. In the prospecting country there's a metal called thorium, which has established a troublesome reputation as a sort of fool's gold of the atomic age.)

Another essential is the grubstake—mainly, that means money. It might also include a puptent and two blankets, or a house trailer complete with well-stocked food freezer. Whatever he brings, the uranium hunter will have to get along on it. Prospecting is a rugged, full-time, non-paying job; a man can't prospect seriously and hold down a job at the same time. When his grubstake is gone, he has to quit prospecting or starve.

Assuming he is adequately equipped and financed, he is ready to grapple with the biggest question of all. The question that will dog him every step of the way as long as he's a prospector.

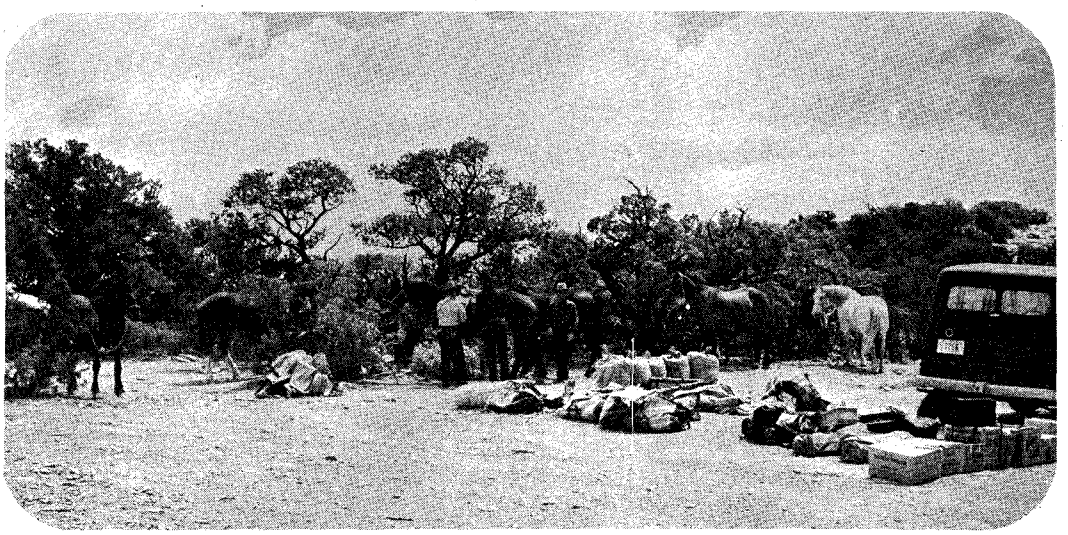
Where? Where is uranium, and where isn't it?

The one general area in the West, where everyone knows there's uranium, is the Colorado Plateau. The Plateau is a vast, mile-high desert, 450 miles long and 300 miles wide, an irregular oval centering on the only four-way border in the U.S., where the state lines of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado meet and cross. All the big uranium finds have been made here, all of the operating uranium mines are located in this one area—an area big enough to hold eight eastern states with plenty of room left over.

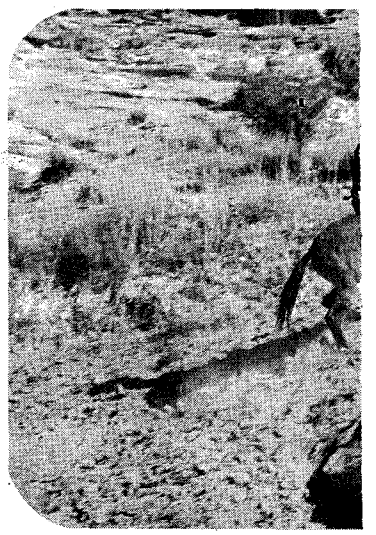
THE PLATEAU is not the only place in the West to look for uranium. Maybe it isn't even the best. But it's the only place that's really been tried.

There are about 10,000 people trying to make money out of uranium on the Plateau today. Some of them are professional hard-rock miners who migrated from the depressed lead and zinc industry to dig uranium for wages. They work for the big mining companies, developing claims that

Getting ready to descend to the canyons.



The level-headed, sure-footed mule is the best means of



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other people found. The pay is good and security is what the hard-rock men are interested in, not bonanzas.

There's a sizable contingent of professional geologists and engineers surveying rock strata, testing samples and writing reports for the mining companies or the A.E.C. And there are the stock promoters and claim promoters—hustlers out to make a fast buck in uranium on someone else's sweat.

Maybe half of the 10,000 are prospectors: grocers, dentists and clerks, oil riggers, merchants and college professors, and a few drifters who never had anything you could call an occupation. Most of them are westerners, particularly Texans and Californians, and a surprising lot of them are married men, with kids. They bring their families and live in house trailers parked on the dusty outskirts of the Plateau boomtowns—Grand Junction, Colorado, where the A.E.C. has its main operations and purchasing office; Moab, Utah, near Charlie Steen's fabulous Mi Vida mine; Monticello, Kanab, and Green River, Utah, which vie with the others for the title of "uranium capital of the world."

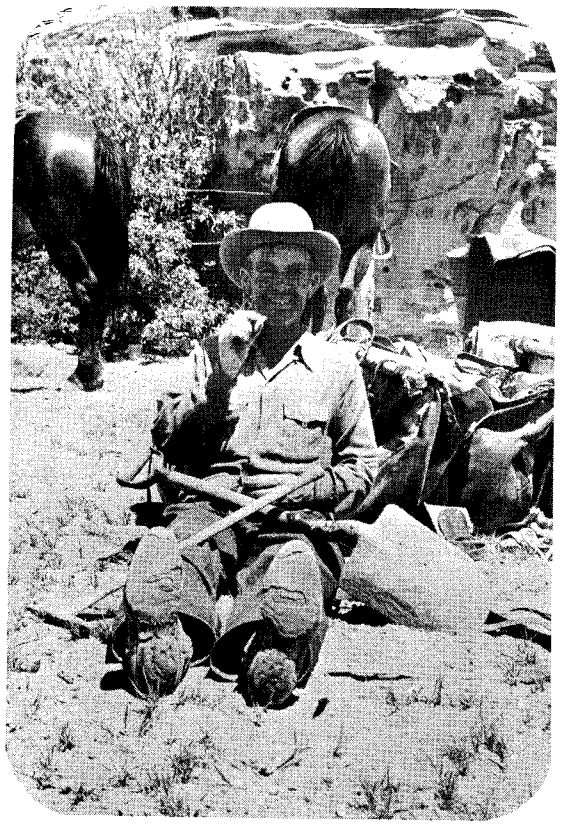
The trailers are the covered wagons of the modern '49ers. In the boomtowns, they're used for offices, for restaurants, even for beauty parlors. A prospector can use his trailer as a base of operations, parking his family there and pushing off into the hills by foot or jeep for days at a time. If he doesn't like the look of the country, he can pack up after a month or so and move his whole domicile to another town a couple of hundred miles away. This way, too, he avoids the high rents which have eaten up many a prospector's grubstake in short order. Two- and three-room cabins that would have cost a family $10 a month a couple of years ago are going for $100 and more today. There are even some fancy, modernistic motels going up in the middle of this God-forsaken desert—anticipating the day when uranium prospecting will be "the thing to do."

Rent gouging, as a matter of fact, is just about the only serious moral offense in the uranium country that is common enough to cause any concern. It's almost disillusioning to discover that the Plateau has none of the gambling, whoring, street-corner duels, and rotgut revels that helped make the Klondike infamous. Utah forbids gambling, allows no bars except beer halls, and takes a stern Mormon view of sexual hi-jinks. In Moab last year, the law found that the dancing girls in a visiting carnival were doing some of their entertaining in a horizontal position. The wenches were slapped with heavy fines, ordered to get out of town for good, and told to pass the word amongst their contemporaries that Moab was strictly closed to that kind of business.

Utah is no place for drones or barflies, and the rest of the Plateau is pretty much the same way. This is a clean-cut, Chamber of Commerce type of rush. Its trademarks are the new, pin-neat drugstores and gas stations on boomtown Main Streets, the beginnings of housing programs, booster clubs talking about the "unlimited potentials" of uranium and dreaming of a future when their overgrown trailer parks will be bustling, industrial cities. There hasn't even been a claim-jump killing, to anybody's knowledge. An elderly prospector was shot dead near Kanab a year or so back while he was checking claims, but police think the motive was personal and not a dispute over mining rights. There are plenty of disputes, all right—but lawyers are getting the business instead of undertakers.

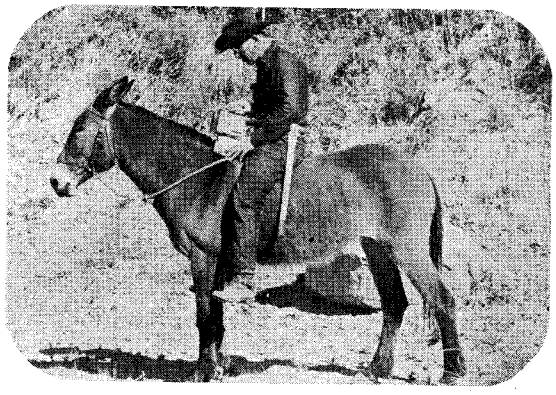
URANIUM provides its own entertainment, without the bright lights and floozies. Prospectors live, eat, and breathe uranium. In the jam-packed little boomtown schoolhouses, the prospectors' kids compare notes on how Pop is doing; after classes they go out and play a game called "claim jumping," where one stakes a uranium claim on a pile of sand and the others try to take it away from him. In the trailer "parks," prospectors' wives socialize, discuss the difficulties of getting desert grit out of overalls in the wash, and wonder out loud when the old man is either going to get rich or regain his sanity.

(Continued on page 34)



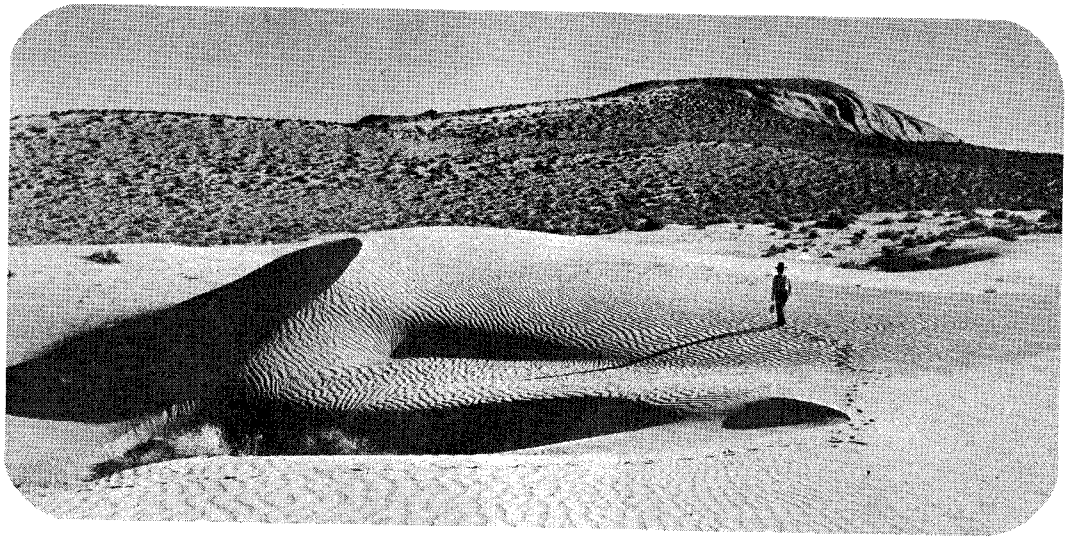
Jim Gates, native of Escalante, Utah, guide. Jim knows the trails through uranium country like a cougar.

Testing a piece of float rock.



transportation in this rugged country.

Wind-sculptured sand dunes at Middle Warm Creek.



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Illustrated by Steve Golembeski

(See page 48)

Now the Apaches rose snake-like for the last rush up and over the wall.

NEW MEXICO

The valley grass was burning. Yellow smoke drifted with the wind and hung over the river like fog . . . Fear-crazed horses galloped headlong. Rifles cracked incessantly, and on the hillsides, the shrill screeching of Victorio's braves wore on . . .

APACHE SIEGE AT ALMA

By WILLIAM HARNIN

MEN, women, and ashen-faced children stood before the roofless cabin, all of them staring silently up the unquiet valley to the north. It was ten o'clock in the morning, April 29, 1880.

At that precise moment, painted Apache braves materialized on the hillsides east of Alma, New Mexico Territory, their red headbands flickering through the sage and juniper. Catching sight of the small knot of white settlers before the cabin, the trotting warriors began a weird, high-pitched screeching. The air whispered suddenly with the deadly swish of arrows. Apaches flowed in irregular lines down the brown desert hillsides, firing slugs and arrows at the cabin. Here and there a warrior paused to set the bear grass afire before coming on.

The white settlers scurried into the cabin, barred the heavy door and stood to the firing stations as the advancing Apaches swept across the road. The braves, pausing at intervals to aim, fire, and reload, charged forward behind a squat, gray-haired chief. Yelling a war-cry, the chief rallied his warriors and led them in a headlong charge toward the cabin.

Abruptly from behind the thick cottonwood logs burst a terrific volley of rifle fire. The Alma defenders sighted their Winchesters hurriedly, fired, levered the actions, sighted and fired again. Their shooting swelled and faded, to swell suddenly again as the momentarily repulsed Apaches drove once more across the road. A fog of gun smoke and dust blinded the defenders.

Trembling women and crying children crowded the center of the littered floor. Mrs. Susan Meador shuffled imperturbably about the stifling enclosure, talking calmly to the riflemen. She paused to stare scornfully at the other women. "Stop your damned shaking and sniveling!" she snapped. "They haven't scalped us yet!"

Riderless Indian ponies floundered in the muddy water of the nearby creek. Painted brown bodies slid from cabin to cabin on the far side of the road, and scrambled as close to the large cabin-

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fort where the settlers were holed up as cover would permit. Apache bullets slammed into the cabin logs in a steady barrage.

Mrs. Meador glanced about the smoking stockade, picked up an empty water pail, lifted a trap-door in the floor and filled it from the irrigation ditch that ran under one wall of the cabin. "Here," she ordered sharply, "you gals grab pots and pans and fill 'em with water. What do you expect to do when them red devils cut the ditch off?"

NO ONE made mistakes with Apaches; not even the U.S. Government. At least you didn't make them with Chief Victorio.

First, a bumbling Indian Service pushed the resentful Victorio from one New Mexico reservation to the next—he and his whole Warm Springs Apache band. Not once or twice, but half a dozen times. Each push goaded the proud Apaches a little closer to the red brink of war. This was in April of 1879.

Tension grew rapidly between the Apaches and the settlers. In mid-May, inhabitants of the Alma settlement began missing livestock. Jim Cooney, an ex-sergeant of the 8th Cavalry, accompanied three of his neighbors on a hunt for the missing stock. They found the heifers lying dead in a rocky wash with their throats cut.

"Apaches!" snarled Cooney. "Come on—let's see if we can trail 'em. These cattle were killed only hours ago."

Doggedly the settlers hunted Apache sign on the trails skirting Alma, a tiny cluster of cabins in the shadow of the Mogollon Mountains in southwestern New Mexico Territory.

"There they are!" suddenly shouted Cooney, pointing at the flutter of a red head-band in the distant sage. Horses at a gallop, the settlers flushed five Apaches in a gully and shot them down. Cooney reined in, dismounted, and examined the bodies. He straightened quickly.

"This one is Victorio's brother-in-law," he said, keeping his voice low. "This means trouble a-plenty. The Apache blood code of revenge will send Victorio on the warpath *muy pronto*. We've pulled a bad boner, boys."

The settlers mounted and rode off, glancing apprehensively at the silent sage. The stage was set for the blood bath to follow.

Yet the day of reckoning for the Alma pioneers was slow in coming. Almost another year was to pass before Victorio, heartsick over the death of his brother-in-law, raging at the injustices heaped upon the Apaches by the Indian Service, moved against the settlers. His band came flitting through the hills above Alma Valley on April 28, 1880. They drove old John Lambert from his mine cabin, and the squaws made camp in and around the dispossessed white man's house.

ON the crown of a small, knob-like hill, a mile down valley from Lambert's mine, a huddled cluster of white men sat their horses tensely. Now and then a man stood up in his stirrups to stare north up the valley along the San Francisco River. The men were apprehensive, the palms of their hands were damp with cold sweat, and they spoke in whispers. Ex-sergeant Jim Cooney was there, and John Lambert, who'd been chased from his cabin the night before by Victorio's braves. Also Bill Wilcox, a braggart who claimed that he was not afraid of any Indian that ever lived. Jim Keller was there, an old-time mountain man who knew sensible fear but ignored it. The others were Alma settlers—some farmers, the rest dirt-stained gold miners. They lived in the tiny settlements which hunkered down in the mountain gullies of the San Francisco River valley—Alma, Pleasanton, Copper Creek and Clairmont. All the towns were located in a tight circle not more than ten miles apart.

"Listen to me," Bill Wilcox said suddenly. "The Apaches are out strong. They've been running in and out of those hills like ants!"

Cooney stared coldly at him. "You miners are like children. This Apache nonsense is nothing to get excited about."

The ex-sergeant's voice was edged with contempt. Wilcox flushed angrily. "Hell, I'm not excited! But there was around two hundred warriors in the bunch I saw near Lambert's mine."

Wilcox lit his pipe with trembling fingers. A spot over his eye twitched uncontrollably, and he rubbed it with ore-stained fingers.

"This is the real thing," he gabbled nervously. "The sooner we get troops up here from Silver City, the better it's going to be for all of us . . ."

He broke off abruptly. "Look—look! Up by Lambert's mine. *Indians!*"

Apaches, in groups of two or three, were trotting into the valley to the north, wraithlike among the rocks.

No sound came to the watchers. It was as though they glimpsed phantoms on the sage and rock-strewn hillsides.

Cooney pulled his Winchester from the saddle scabbard, levered a cartridge into the chamber. He searched the Alma Valley with quick eyes, turned his gaze north again along the valley. The ghost-like forms had vanished. "Well, what are we going to do now?" asked Cooney harshly. "Sit here like cowards and let 'em attack the settlements?"

No one answered. Cooney leaned forward in his saddle and shot words at his companions. "We've got Lambert, Roberts, Williams and Mader. Chick, and ten or twelve others we can count on. If we hit these bucks now, we'll throw 'em off balance."

"Who's going to warn the settlers if we attack?" asked a miner. "In all the valley hereabouts, there's only twenty-two fighting men," the miner went on. "Attack, *hell!*"

"All right," Cooney conceded finally. "Let's get going then to warn the folks in the valley. We'll have to get messengers to Pleasanton, Copper Creek and Clairmont. Let's pull all those people into Alma." The ex-sergeant spoke with military precision now, as he ordered all guns, ammunition, and edged weapons taken immediately to Alma where the stoutest cabin stood on the flat near the river.

Then, as the couriers rode off into the gathering darkness, Cooney kneed his mount closer to Lambert, an old friend. "Take another man, John," he suggested. "Ride up near your mine, and find out what you can." The two men shook hands wordlessly. Cooney wheeled his horse, beckoned to the remaining mounted men, and galloped down valley.

ON the trail, the men kept alert watch on the gloomy bowl of the valley. Cooney cradled a carbine in the crook of his right arm. Frequently he stood up in his stirrups as he rode, scanning the ominous black mesquite hulks with anxious eyes.

The riders reached the Meador ranchhouse on the outskirts of Alma at nine o'clock, and reined in sharply as lamplight spilled through the open door. A woman's voice called out, "What's the excitement? Are the Apaches out?"

Then Mrs. Susan Meador saw the riders' faces in the yellow glow from the windows. She spoke again, holding her voice in tight control. "It *is* the Apaches, isn't it?"

Cooney spoke. "Yes, Ma'am. They've taken over Lambert's diggin's. You folks had better fort up with the rest of the valley people."

He paused, choosing his words carefully. "We think it's Victorio, Mrs. Meador, so there's no time to lose."

In the wind-guttered flare of the kerosene lamps, Cooney saw Mrs. Meador turn to her husband, John, who sat at the table. "It's Victorio," she said simply.

John Meador forced a chuckle. He called out to the riders: "My garden's planted, boys. You can let that son-of-a-bitch Victorio come any time he wants to." Meador laughed bitterly, and looked at his four children, grouped around the table. None of the young'uns smiled. They stared out the door at the riders, round-eyed with alarm.

Susan Meador barred the cabin door as Cooney's group rode on. She shooed the children off to bed, and reached over the mantel for the bullet mould. Her husband took the lead pot from the kitchen cupboard, stoked the fire until the grids glowed red, and placed the heavy lead bucket over the flame. As the sounds of the awakening village stirred outside their windows, the pioneer Meador family made ready for the fighting hours ahead.

For most of their lives, the Meadors had known the stern hardships of the Southwestern frontier. They'd almost starved when their homestead at Prescott, Arizona, failed to yield a living crop. Then, in 1878, they had toiled alone over the rocky trails to Alma, driving their stock. Near the banks of the San Francisco River, they found a new homesite. Here they had built a cabin, planted their crops and dug their irrigation ditches.

Now, as the flickering kerosene lamps cast their somber shadows on the white-washed cabin walls, there was no need to tell the Meadors to prepare to fight for their lives. They had been fighting to exist for years.

THROUGHOUT the settlement the homesteaders wakened at Cooney's urgent summons and rushed to doors and windows to receive the dread news that Apache raiders were near. Once aroused, the settlers wasted no time. In the chill night they gathered at the Roberts' thick-walled cabin, which, many years before, had been the first shelter raised in Alma. The cabin's walls were foot-thick cottonwood logs; one door split the east wall, and three windows—one in each of the remaining sides—opened upon the bare spaces which rimmed the area. Into the corral—which had been built next to the cabin so that one cabin wall was also a corral fence—the horses were hastily driven. Under one wall of the cabin ran Alma's main

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irrigation ditch, Roberts' prudent insurance of a permanent water supply in the new house.

Feverishly the men, women and children made ready for the siege. On the dirt floor of the Roberts' place, they tossed rifles, pistols, butcher knives, hatchets, and rusted, long-unused cavalry sabers. While youngsters oiled the rusty cutting edges and wiped off the blades, the women loaded the empty chambers of the guns and stacked all the weapons against the walls.

Along the length of the main irrigation ditch which threaded through the heart of the small settlement, young men ripped out the timbers of the sluice gates and spiked them to the walls. Under Jim Cooney's supervision, they dragged huge water-soaked logs from the river bottoms and built a second wall facing the most likely point of attack, the east hillside. With many a ribald jest, they tore down Roberts' privy and nailed the soiled boards across the gaping windows of the cabin fortress.

Tardily, Cooney thought of a firing platform. Without such a parapet, he knew they would be impotent against the running Apache skirmish line. Sleepless for many hours, he directed the men in knocking out the roof supports of the cabin. "Put your loops around those rafters and haul 'em out," he told them. Moments later, the riders tore away the top of the cabin. Cooney watched intently as the men nailed a scaffolding to the inside wall, high enough to provide a good view of the area around the cabin. Then, as the sky paled with dawn, Cooney felt that they were ready.

The weary ex-sergeant looked at the tired workers, and his glance was like pointing a gun at them. "Will any of you ride with me for a final check on the isolated cabins?" he asked. "We've got to be certain that no one's been forgotten."

Nobody answered. Some of the men fiddled with harnesses they were carrying, and looked away. An oldster named Chick broke the stiff silence. Ejecting an amber stream of tobacco juice, he "allowed" he'd ride along to help out.

The two men trotted their mounts into the cottonwood suckers near the river, talking lightly to each other as if they were merely out after strayed stock. It was the last time they were seen alive.

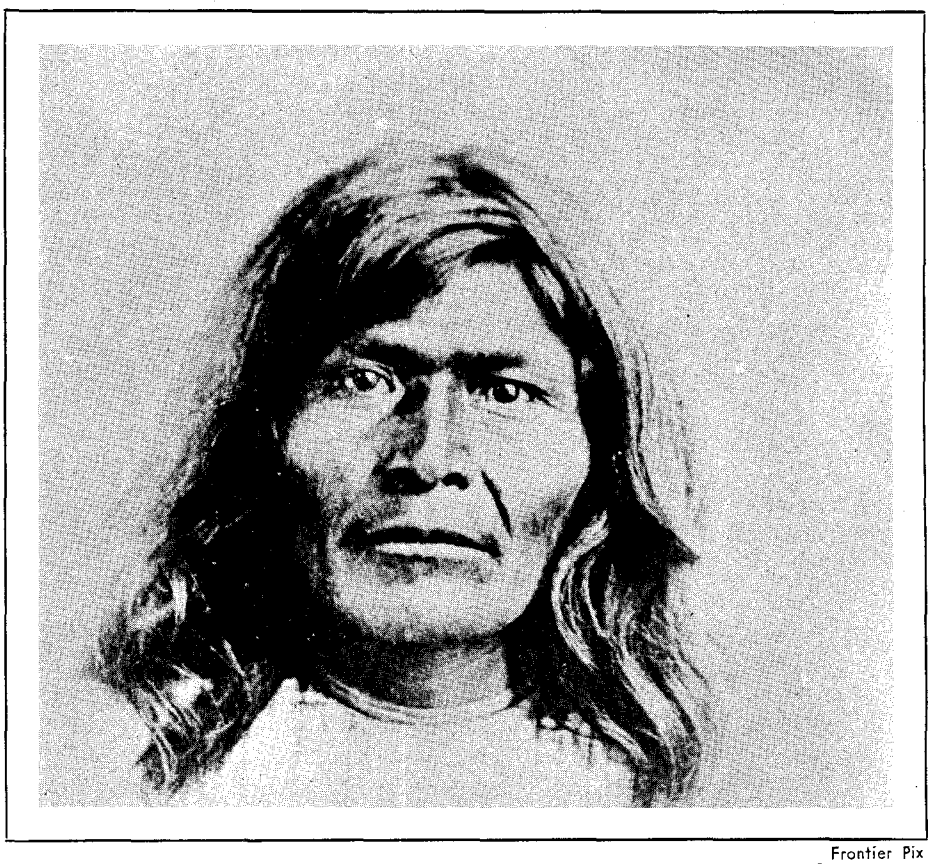
MINUTES after Cooney's and Chick's departure, Bill Wilcox and Jim Keller scouted the valley northward toward Mineral Creek, a half-mile from Roberts' cabin. The hooting of owls from the darkness on both sides of the trail brought them to a wary halt. Nervously, Keller bent to adjust a stirrup strap. On the instant, a bullet from a hidden Apache rifle shattered his hand.

Keller cried out in pain, and both men swung their horses for town. They galloped down the valley road, spurring hard. Suddenly they ran into two riderless horses. The animals were trotting toward them, reins dangling. They had emerged from the tangle of cottonwood suckers along the river's edge.

"Cooney's and Chick's horses!" exclaimed Wilcox.

Keller swayed in his saddle, dizzy with the pain of his wound. "We're in for it now," he gasped. "Come on—let's ride for the fort."

The Apaches cut off the main irrigation ditch at 11:30 a.m. on that embattled morning of April 29, 1880. The women were still dipping pots when the water ceased running.



Frontier Pix

Victorio, famed Apache chieftain who led the attack on the Alma settlers.

In Roberts' beleaguered cabin, twenty men levered desperately at the hot Winchesters, striving to check the advancing Apaches. Intermittently, the lithe brown bodies of the warriors gleamed naked in the roadway and specter-like in the milling dust roil of the crowded corrals. Fleetingly they appeared among the smoking cabins, fired hastily, and faded into the brush, or collapsed writhing on the road.

The shooting continued spasmodically through the long daylight hours. Now the water in the pots and pans dropped to a dangerously low level as frightened, crying children spilled the precious fluid onto the dirt floor. Arguments, heated and uncontrolled, broke out among the women. Atop the parapet, exhausted men fainted. When one fell out, another took his place. The rifles cracked incessantly. On the hillsides, the shrill screeching of Victorio's braves wore on.

The valley grass was burning. Yellow smoke drifted with the wind and hung over the river like fog. It floated into the cabin fortress, half-choking the defenders. Fear-crazed horses galloped headlong, looming now and again in wind-blown gaps in the ring of fire.

Sweat spattered from the riflemen and dropped into the cowering cluster of women and children below. The cabin stank of blood and urine and burned powder, the acrid smell of burning mesquite and the acid stink of the horses outside. Copper cartridge cases littered the parapet, where Mrs. Meador moved about ladling water to the defenders. She paused near wounded Jim Keller operating his old Sharps buffalo gun one-handed. "We've been lucky," she said, kneeling to squint through an aperture in the logs. "Only one wounded—"

Nearby, along the parapet, Bill Wilcox exposed himself recklessly, daring the Apaches to charge. "Come on, you sneaking red varmints!" he bellowed hoarsely. "Come on, you . . ."

Wilcox took a bullet in the forehead, and toppled to the floor below.

"—And one killed," finished Mrs. Meador coolly, and moved on to the next rifleman in line.

THE rifles of the defenders sounded less frequently now. Ammunition was running low, and cartridges must be conserved against the danger of an all-out assault. Late in the afternoon, Victorio sent his warriors in for the kill.

Phantom figures, bright in war paint and sweaty red head-bands, scrabbled on their bellies by the corral. Through the gaps in the cabin wall, the women caught the flash of sunlight on Apache knife blades. The braves inched their way forward in the scant shelter of the drifting smoke and the corral logs, less than thirty feet away. The wailing of the women and the children mounted in the stifling heat of the cabin.

"Damn it!" Mrs. Meador screamed at them. "Stop that infernal yowling!"

Now the Apaches rose snake-like for the last rush up and over the wall. They never made it. Caught dead center by a rain of bullets, warriors spun grotesquely, crumpled in death. The survivors fled, leaving their dead behind.

The women ceased their crying as darkness fell, knowing that Apaches fought only in daylight. On the parapet, the men kept constant watch. Mrs. Meador felt her way along the wall, ladling out what was left of the water.

(Continued on page 30)

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ILLUSTRATED BY KEITH SOWARD

It sure was a rip-snorting time on that Sunday back in '95 when the young cowpokes decided to help the old-timers get religion.

By GEORGE PHILLIPS

I REMEMBER 'way back—les' see, 1895 from 1956; yes, just 61 years—when we had one of the most successful baptizings in the state of Arizona. We had no telephone or radios and not much rural mail in that thinly-settled country in those days. Word was sent out by grapevine to all ranches within a hundred mile radius that the Creek wagon would begin rounding up the last Sunday in May. We'd meet on that day where the old overland stage road crossed Sandia Creek.

'Tis said that present-day cowboys haven't got the vim and pep we old-timers had fifty and sixty years ago. Well, in a way they haven't—it's just their different environment. We had no movies, no hotspots and such, so us old-time punchers just bottled up our fun till we had an audience. That was usually at the spring roundup meets.

Looks like I'm going to use up all my kindling before I get my fire started, so I'll buckle right down to cases.

Our wagon boss was about fifty years old and very religious. He never cussed nor drank liquor nor caroused, and we onery, sinful punchers respected him. Yet somehow he always set the roundup meetings on a Sunday. About forty punchers were gathered together on that beautiful Sabbath of which I write. They came from far and near. Each cowboy had his mount of hosses, ten to fifteen each, a pack hoss, and a bedroll.

Well, the first thing of course was to kill a beef for dinner. A two-year-old beef usually lasted two days, and there was always frijole beans, Arbuckle coffee, spuds, and a sack of sugar. Sometimes the cook would build us a concoction of rice and raisins called a "spotted pup." 'Twas sure mighty ample truck to a bunch of hungry cowboys.

After dinner we younger ones—buttons we were called—repaired to the stream to dabble in the water. Three or four boys had brought fishing lines and hooks along, and soon had a nice string of channel cat for the cook to prepare for supper. Since the Indians had left, some ten or fifteen years before, the stream had never been fished and it was just a-jumpin' with fish.

Running water has a peculiar fascination for cow-country folks; they like to splash in it, fondle it, and maybe even drink a little of it. The stream was about ten feet wide, straight up-an-down banks, and the prettiest salt grass meadows on both sides. Some chuckleheaded peeler remarked, "Wouldn't this be a dandy spot for a baptizing?"

Well, it was Sunday and everything was quiet and serene and beautiful—up to then! Now Bill grabbed Sam, who had mentioned "baptizing," and tried to throw him out into the middle of the stream. They scuffled and rasseled, and finally both of 'em fell in. That set the rest of us off, and in less than an hour every button had been baptized half a dozen times.

BUT even a bunch of husky young cowpokes will eventually play out and get winded, so we lay down on the bank to figure out some more deviltry. After debating the matter at some length, we decided that the old codgers were in greater need of baptizing than we were. Some of those old stiffs had never had the chance to be baptized, or if they had, maybe they'd backslid and fallen from grace and needed another immersion to save their souls. Well, by golly, we were just the boys to do the job!

Now those old cowpokes hadn't drawn near the stream to witness the show we'd put on. They were kind of leery, and, like old crippled cows in a roundup, they stayed clear to keep from getting jammed. We buttons had to go to the

(Continued on page 34)

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Photo Courtesy Mercaldo Archives

Madame Moustache, famed frontier woman gambler, as she looked when she was also a queen of hearts.

A shrewd gambler but a sucker in the game of love, that was the Pretty French gal known as

MADAME MOUSTACHE

By BOB & JAN YOUNG

"A WOMAN'S place is in the home and indeed not at the gambling tables," San Francisco's *Alta Californian* fretted editorially in an early 1850 edition. "There is no clearer proof of this than the example of twenty-year-old Mme. Simone Jules as roulette croupier in the Bella Union. No more apt phrase can be coined to describe these female sharpers than the one used along the Rio Grande: *"Los God Dammes' . . ."*

Though the indignant chorus was swelled by the temperance groups, the newspaper's inveighing did little more than draw more miners to the Bella Union to see the fabulous Mme. Jules. In a month, the Verandah, the El Dorado, and the Continental were forced to follow suit by hiring their own female dealers: Poker Alice, Kitty the Schemer, and Minnie the Gambler. But the dark-eyed little beauty who had been first, had made hers count. Within two years Mme. Jules had won enough to cut loose from the Bella Union and strike out on her own for Nevada City, lush with the gold of 1853.

A pert, fashionably dressed Mme. Jules stepped from the stage and swished into the National House, the city's finest. She hesitated a moment, a slim finger tracing pursed lips, then she shrugged and signed the register. Eleanore Dumont —a new name and a new start for Mme. Jules.

But the past was hard after her. It wasn't ten days when a gasp of surprise rose from cynical Nevada City. Madame Dumont was opening a gambling hell!

Free champagne and food were provided on opening night, and miners with slicked-down hair pushed and shoved to throw their doeskin pouches of gold dust on the Vingt-et-Un table, presided over by the Madame herself. Her wide black eyes sparkled as she watched the play. She smilingly chaffed the losers, graciously paid the all-too-few winners, and her success was never in doubt from the moment she skillfully fingered off that first card.

But Madame Dumont quickly realized her method was self-limiting. She could handle only one deck, and only a half dozen players could bet at her twenty-one table at one time. She needed a partner and the solution to her problem walked into town with Dave Tobin.

DAVE TOBIN was young and handsome, assets to which Madame had no objection, in addition to being a good gambler. She approached him with a proposition to help her manage the Dumont Palace for wages and a percentage. Dave agreed without hesitation, even to her stipulation that the games must be run honestly and debts paid promptly. "Winners must be paid off to the last dollar," she warned.

To all appearances the arrangement between Dave Tobin and Madame Dumont was strictly business. But when the pair soon secured adjoining apartments, Nevada City realized another bargain had been struck, too. "What do we care, s'long as the game is honest?" was the general reaction.

Dave handled the big-stake games, and arranged for poker, faro, roulette, and a number of other tables. The Dumont Palace flourished under his management, and Dave knew it.

"Seems as I should be cutting a little higher on the hog," Dave observed one night as they finished dinner. "We've tripled the take, but I'm still getting the same. How about making it a fifty-fifty split now?"

Madame Dumont studied Dave, her finger tracing across an upper lip which was just beginning to show the suggestion of a fuzzy line. "Dave, I need no man. I got along before I met you, and I can make it afterwards," she said coldly. "No man can bluff me with a bob-tailed flush."

Dave looked startled. He'd counted on their closer association as the filling card. But he still had one more joker. "You, of course, can pay off my share in cash, right now?" He looked into her oval face, softly framed with brown curls.

Madame Dumont's expression hardened at the request. It meant running her games dangerously short-chipped and he knew it. But a debt was a debt.

Bitter at Dave's inconstancy, Eleanore Dumont paid him off the next morning without a comment. She had assured Dave he would never be missed. Her problem was to keep on reassuring herself, even after she'd arranged for a new manager. This one was to be strictly business. "Never again," she swore, "will I mix men with cards."

MADAME DUMONT played even more grimly after Dave left Nevada City, determined to show any man she was his match. But the Dumont Palace seemed to have a hollow emptiness it had never had before. Secretly, deep in her heart, she must have been hoping her lover would come back. When the mail packet a few months later brought newspapers relating the death of Dave Tobin in New York, Madame closed the Palace, and disappeared from Nevada City.

Perhaps in secret grief, perhaps a run of gamblers' luck,

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the life of Madame Eleanore Dumont became thereafter a tragedy and a legend of the West. Moulded in San Francisco's burly Forty-nines, and polished by her experience at Nevada City, Madame Dumont became a creature of the boom camps that were burgeoning throughout the West. Her skill and honesty were admired, and the fact she was always a good touch for a busted gambler gained respect. More than once she refused play against some youngster who she realized knew little about gambling.

Operating alone, courage was her only protection. Once in Pioche, she stepped in the midst of a milling group of angry miners, whose guns were drawn. Laughing, joking, and diverting attention to herself, she averted a blood-letting, all too common in Pioche.

As the gold and silver veins of one strike pinched out, Madame Dumont packed her gambling layout and followed the crowd toward the next rainbow. Around her now were a few girls who practiced a trade even more ancient than gambling. Among these brides of the multitude was a fifteen-year-old redhead named Martha Jane Canary. Martha was a willing pupil. From time to time she even dealt poker or manipulated the faro box, but her fame was to rest on her later nickname: "Calamity Jane."

Madame Dumont's several interests brought prosperity, and her Bannock establishment showed it. There a seven-room log house accommodated the Madame and her troupe. Downstairs were the gambling tables, a bar, and a dance floor. Overhead three girls and an appropriate number of rooms were available for those who tired of the entertainments on the ground floor.

Drinking, often more than reasonable, late hours, and rough living combined to etch the features of the once-beautiful Madame Dumont. Above her lips, which perpetually now turned down at the corners, the fuzziness had darkened into a distinct line. When a miner, with the Western flair for nicknames, remarked he was going to play at Madame Moustache's that night, the identity of Simone Jules, or Eleanore Dumont, was extinguished forever, and a new name born.

Madame Moustache's insistence upon running an orderly disorderly house forced her to leave that lush post. Idaho Jack was a walking whiskey vat when he arrived at the Madame's and he promptly began to raise hell and put a block under it. Madame Moustache ordered him out. Idaho Jack scuffled with the Madame and, in the struggle, he bit her. Incensed, she had him arrested.

IDAHO JACK was smart enough to hire himself a lawyer for the trial. The whole outcome rested on whether Jack had bitten her, as Madame Moustache maintained stoutly.

Idaho Jack's whole defense rested on his testimony, and his lawyer asked him to open his mouth wide. There wasn't a tooth showing!

Raucous laughter still rang in Madame Moustache's ears as she left town. She knew full well that Idaho Jack would slip his false teeth back into place, but her reputation was gone.

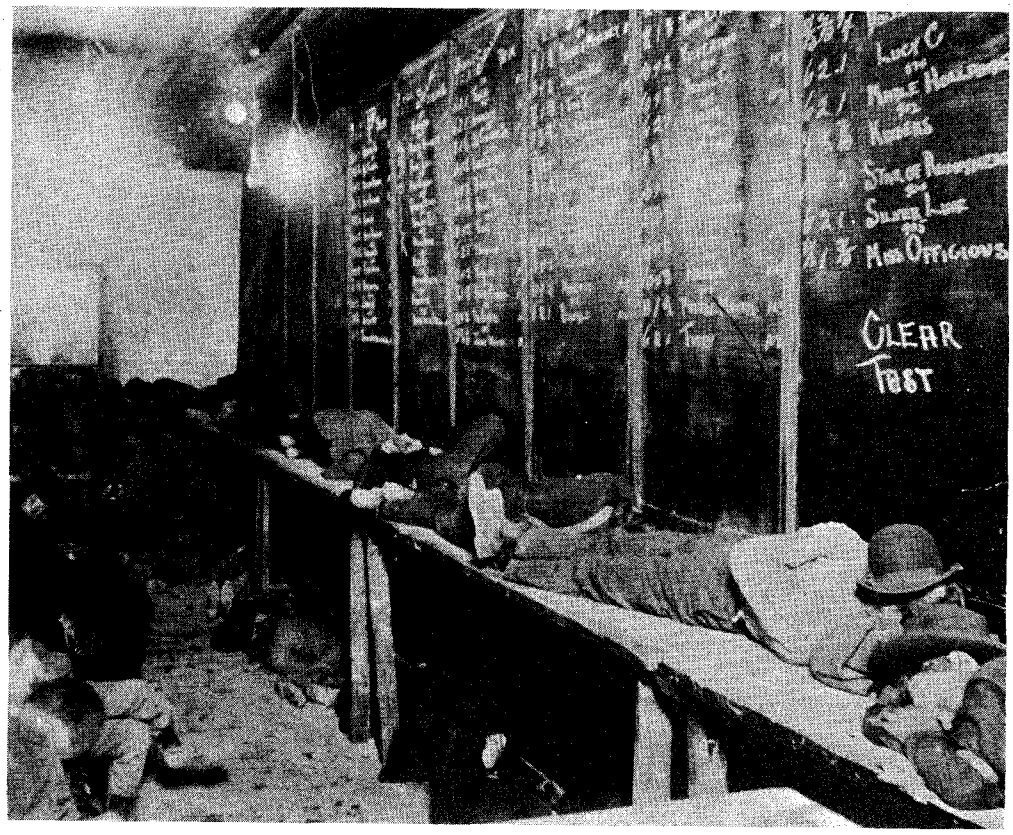
A pair of short-card artists in Cripple Creek fleeced Madame Moustache of what she had salvaged, and she headed for Waverly Place in San Francisco, the demimonde of the West. For more than a year she indulged in the world's oldest profession, then, with another stake, hit off for the boom camps again.

Madame Moustache had just settled down at Fort Benton when her luck turned up. She'd gotten word that a riverboat laden with smallpox-ridden passengers and crew was to put in at Fort Benton. Madame Moustache strap-

(Continued on page 33)

Typical gambling hall of the period in which Madame Moustache operated.

Interior of a "horse-room" after the boys had put in a hard day trying to outguess the nags.



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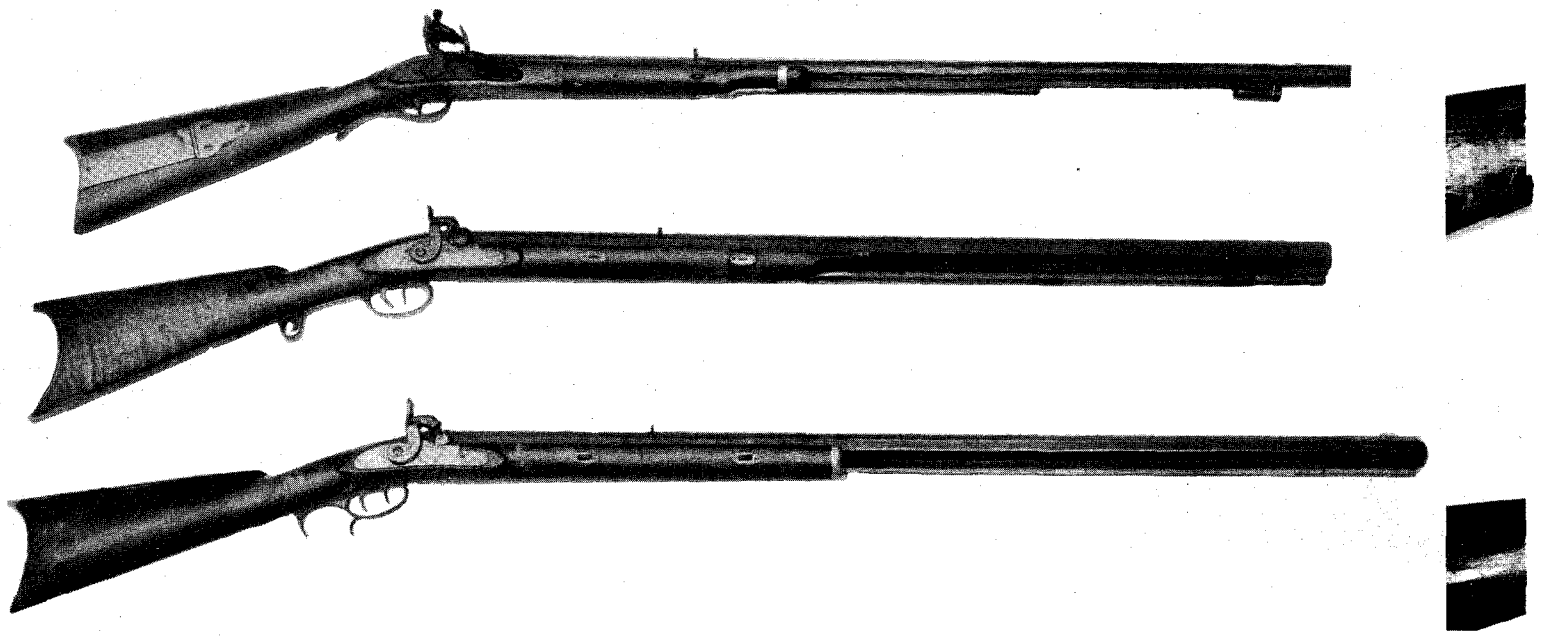
Here is the thrilling story of the Hawken Rifle—and of the men who made and used it. Before the advent of the Sharps and Winchester, the Hawken was

THE RIFLE THAT



Standard Hawken percussion rifle, middle, shows heritage of popular design from early U.S. M1814 flintlock rifle. Top: variant Hawken has longer barrel and tin fore-end tip. Bottom: the model most popular with mountain men.

IN 1808 St. Louis was small but growing. Beyond to the west, stretching countless leagues to the Pacific Ocean, was a land of mystery. It was also full of the elusive beaver, in huge numbers. Already, in 1808, a few adventurous trappers were taking toll of the beaver—but the great days of the fur trade were yet to come.

Among the newcomers to St. Louis was Jake Hawken. In town scarcely a year, the fever of a town sensing a boom had caught him, and his ambition of becoming a gunsmith in this raw, turbulent, gateway village—an open door to the Louisiana Territory—seemed close to being a reality.

And reality it eventually became. Within twenty years the name "Hawken" became known as the symbol—from the Rio Bravo to the Columbia—of the "best dang rifle made."

Trappers needed rifles, and Jake, whose Dutch gunmaking ancestors had immigrated to America many years before, was eager to open a gunshop and be first in a wide-open field. Experienced in the making of flintlock guns, Jake figured that he needed only a chance to make good. But to secure that chance was difficult for young Jake. Until 1815 he probably worked about St. Louis as an assistant mechanic. Nothing came easy for Jake—hard work and plenty of dogged determination were necessary to turn ambition into reality for him.

The shop of "J. Hawken, Gunmaker" opened its doors in 1815, but business was not too brisk—canals and wilderness trails had to be hewed through forests to allow settlers to arrive and become customers. Finally, after seven years, business warranted Jake's sending to Maryland for his younger brother, Sam, to join him. Thirty-year-old Sam arrived from Hagerstown by the easy way—steamboat from New Orleans—on June 3, 1822.

In the year of 1822, once-sleepy St. Louis had become a teeming headquarters for fur traders and trappers. They never left St. Louis without first visiting Jake Hawken's gunshop on the bustling levee. Keen-eyed, observant, they stood about the shop, intently watching the workmen at rifling machine and woodworking bench, thoroughly enjoying the activity and the smell of oils, metals, and fresh wood. Jake tolerated them as potential customers, but allowed no loud talking or horseplay. He had decided to switch production from flintlocks to caplocks about that time and was in no mood to brook criticism from the mountain men.

Bill Williams, famed trapper and Indian-fighter, was one of the first customers for a percussion-type rifle, although he had walked in to buy a flintlock. Never noted for his good humor, Williams was annoyed to find Jake Hawken making caplocks. Growled Bill, "Percussion caps is handy, but ef ye lose a flint, ye can chip yoreself off another somewhars and yore gun is good as new."

To this old-fashioned argument, Jake Hawken retorted acidly, "Suppose it rains and wets your priming powder, or the wind blows hard enough to clean out your pan—what have you got *then?* Pack enough caps to last and hang onto 'em, you damn fool!"

DUBIOUS, willing to be convinced, Williams agreed to follow Jake's pointed advice. He never regretted buying the "new-fangled" caplock rifle.

Brusque, short-spoken, and always busy, Jake Hawken was a conscientious gunsmith utterly devoted to his craft. Jake inspected each finished weapon before it left his shop. Almost fanatical was his insistence that each rifle be as near perfection as painstaking craftsmanship could make it.

"We only make 'em," snapped Jake, in response to Sam's irked objection to such strict supervision. "Our customers stake their lives on our rifles!"

This was literally true. Hawken rifles went with General William Ashley's first expedition to the Indian country in 1823-24 and armed guides and freighters operating the wagon trains on the Santa Fe Trail. In later years the "Peerless Pathfinder," Colonel Fremont, specified Hawken for his men. The name "Hawken" stamped on the barrel became recognized as an unconditional guarantee of top gun quality in a turbulent period when a good rifle was a man's best insurance against personal disaster.

The firm now known as "J & S Hawken" grew and pros-

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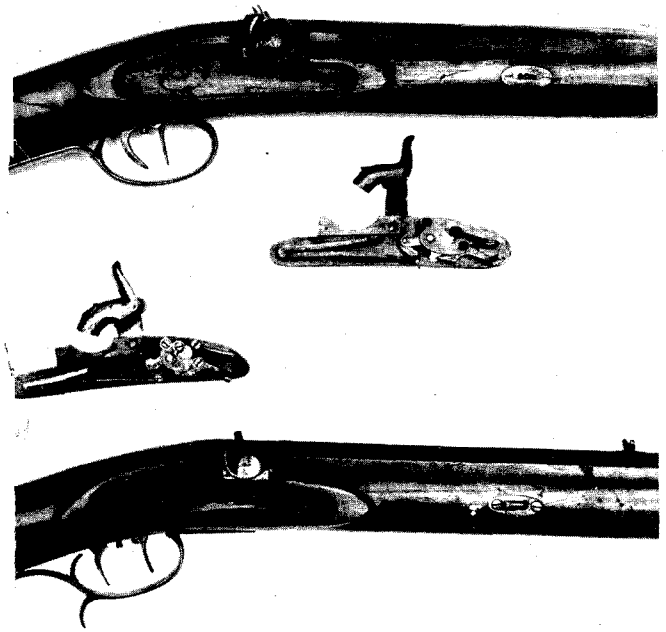
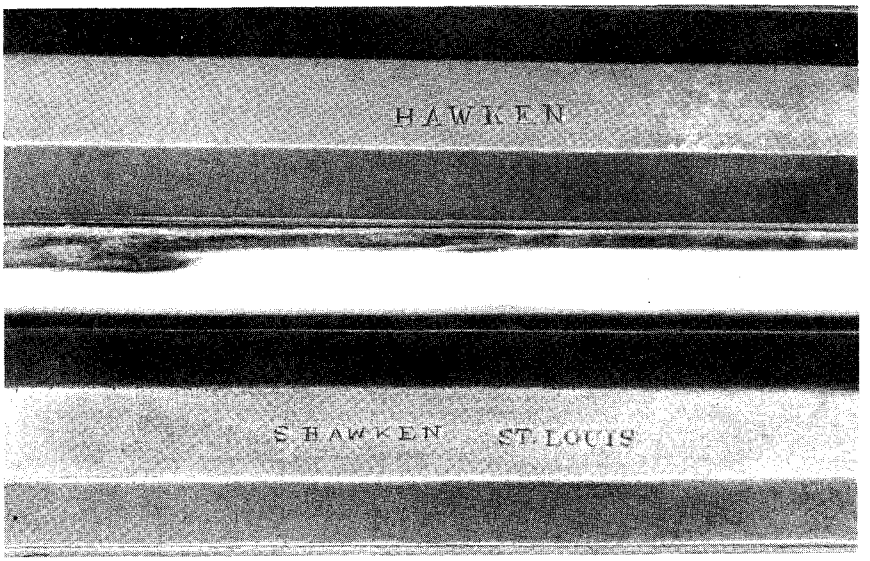
By NORMAN B. WILTSEY

From GUNS Magazine

)PENED THE WEST



Inside top Hawken lock is stamped maker's marks. Only "John", "M", and "C1717" remains, bolster cut-out having removed other stamping. Barrel of top gun is attached by "Carbine-like" patent breech.



Hawken marks, above, may be found . . . if you're lucky enough! Collectors have also identified unmarked Hawken guns through peculiar barrel wedge design.

pered until, in 1832, the Hawken brothers employed a dozen gunsmiths working full time. After Jake's death of cholera in 1849, Sam continued to turn out rifles at the new shop at 33 Washington Avenue. Sam retired in 1862, selling the business to John Gemmer, one of his top workmen. Old Sam returned to the shop every day for years thereafter, spinning yarns to the customers of early days in St. Louis and even taking a hand at making a rifle now and then. Sam died in 1884 at the age of 92. Gemmer continued making Hawken-type rifles until he retired from the gun business in 1915.

The standard Hawken rifle was not fancy; it was built plain and sturdy for long, hard, efficient service under exacting conditions on the plains and in the mountains. Jake Hawken detested "foofaraw" and was apt to bluntly advise a customer requesting silver mountings and elaborate woodcarving on a rifle to take his gun business elsewhere. Paradoxically, according to his mood of the moment, the mercurial little gunsmith might personally "work up" a rifle for a special friend with all the lavish trimmings possible.

In 1822 the brothers charged $22.50 to $25 per rifle, if no extra work was done on the piece. Later, as the demand zoomed, the price rose to $40. Probably at no other time in gunmaking history did so little money buy so much gun. Veteran rifle expert Ned H. Roberts in his book, *The Muzzle Loading Caplock Rifle,* writes, "The Hawken Rifle was *The Rifle* to mountain men, trappers, explorers, and Indian fighters from the time General Ashley built his first fort on the Yellowstone River to the last days of Kit Carson at Taos, New Mexico." Kit's favorite Hawken, at his death in 1868, was presented to the Montezuma Lodge, A.F.&A.M., of Santa Fe, New Mexico, where it is still on exhibition.

ANOTHER excellent example of the Hawken caplock rifle may be seen in the Colorado State Museum in Denver. Once the property of noted plainsman, Mariano Modena, this rifle is .50 caliber, weighs 12½ pounds, and has a 34¾-inch barrel. Purchased by Modena in 1833, this Hawken served its owner faithfully in many a tight ruckus for over forty years. In 1878 the old hunter, in failing health, presented his beloved "Old Lady Hawkins" to his long-time friend, General A. H. Jones. "Keep her clean, General," Modena whispered huskily as he relinquished his rifle. Jones promised he would, and the General and his family kept the pledge for more than half a century before presenting the piece to the Denver Museum.

Technically, the first Hawken caplock rifles seem to have been developed by adopting features of three flintlock rifles of the period just preceding: the time-tested Kentucky rifle, the Harpers Ferry rifle first made in 1800 and improved in 1814 and 1817, and the heavy English sporting rifles produced by London gunsmiths since about 1800. Very few English rifles had reached the American frontier in 1822; the Harpers Ferry was fairly numerous; the Kentucky most numerous of all. In 1822 the long-barreled Kentucky was considered the ultimate in perfection by gunsmiths and shooters alike. Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton had carried the Kentucky in the Indian-haunted woodlands of the "Dark and Bloody Ground," and the famed weapon had served America with brilliant distinction throughout the Revolution and the War of 1812. The superiority of the Kentucky was an unassailable tradition in 1822.

Yet, west of the Mississippi, the renowned Long Rifle of the early pioneers proved clearly inadequate for grizzlies and buffalo. Hunters, returning to St. Louis from the mountains, demanded of gunsmiths a rifle capable of dropping a fat buffalo cow or of stopping a charging grizzly. Jake Hawken, alone among St. Louis gunmakers, produced the needed weapon at the right moment and his market was ready and waiting. Mountain men were avid to buy the rifles as fast as he could turn them out, and Hawken swiftly became famous.

The heavy octagon barrels of the Hawken were from 34 to 38 inches long, although a number of shorter and longer barrels were made. The rifling was seven grooves and lands, with a slow twist of one full turn in 48 inches. The straight stock of maple or walnut was fitted with a rounded iron triggerguard with curved extension, deep-curved butt and raised

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APACHE GOLD

Fortune bestowed a golden smile upon Buck Adams—a smile that changed suddenly to a mocking leer.

By GEORGE DILLON

HAVE you ever noticed how Fortune will shower sudden wealth upon a man, let him savor its intoxicating flavor, then snatch it away again? Well, that's what she did to Buck Adams. But Buck was too tough, determined, and resourceful a gent to take it lying down. He fought desert thirst, savage Apache Indians, and even the U. S. Army to regain the gold she'd snatched from him.

Red and yellow cactus flowers were brightening the desert the spring of 1862 when Buck Adams, with seven other prospectors, came plodding out of California into Arizona Territory, hunting gold. What little precious metal they'd found in California had infected them with a stampeder's feverish and incurable craving to make a rich strike.

By the time they reached Fort Apache, their string of eleven sleek pack mules had dwindled to five lean, scrawny animals, and their packs were depleted and weatherworn. The prospectors bought a modest supply of food at the sutler's store and fell into conversation with the sutler, a chunky, red-faced man with a mustache that drooped dejectedly.

"Better not do any prospectin' east of here," he warned. "That there's Apache country and they're on the warpath."

Buck Adams, a big rugged-looking man with sandy hair and a square, stubborn chin, eyed the sutler with lazy scorn. "Any gold there?" he drawled.

"Hear tell there's plenty," the sutler said, "but no one's ever lived long enough to bring any out."

"If gold's there," Buck said, "I reckon we'll take a whack at it."

"Them Apaches is plain hell," the sutler cautioned. "You never see 'em till they're on you—then it's too late!"

Buck hitched up his trousers and spat contemptuously into the sandbox under the pot-bellied stove. "We been up against Cheyennes and Comanches, so I reckon we won't worry none about Apaches."

The sutler shrugged. "Your funeral," he said curtly.

Adams and his partners loaded the supplies on their mules and moved on eastward, prospecting every likely gulch and canyon. And then, one day, they made the rich strike they'd dreamed of, coarse placer gold lying thick in the gravel bars of a small stream.

Each man selected a plot of ground and began to wash out the gleaming yellow metal. They worked feverishly from daylight till dark, begrudging even the time it took to eat, and their buckskin pokes filled with surprising speed.

But as their gold piled up, they grew increasingly fearful of losing it. With growing unease, they observed the sinister Indian smoke signals rising from buttes and mesas in a dozen directions. And twice, Hein Hoffman, who was by far the most jittery—and watchful—glimpsed a lurking red-brown savage slipping from one red-brown rock to another.

It was too much for Hein. He kept remembering the sutler's warning. After a week of growing tension, he weighed all his gold on the crude, rusty balance they carried, and then figured painfully for a time on a scrap of paper.

"Twelve t'ousand dollars," he said. "In Germany, dot will buy me a goot business. Home, I am going."

HIS partners argued long and earnestly trying to persuade him to stay. But Hein stubbornly persisted in packing up his gold, along with a few belongings, and slipping away in the night to escape the Indians.

Buck and the other six prospectors, more courageous—or foolhardy—built a cabin and continued to work the diggings, burying their nuggets and dust each night under the earthen floor of their cabin. When their food ran short, five of the men took the mules and went to Fort Apache for supplies, promising to be back on the fifth day, at the latest.

When they had not returned by the afternoon of the sixth day, Adams and his remaining companion, Dutch Brandel, a sturdy German emigrant, grew worried. Hoping to catch sight of the missing men, they climbed the steep hill which towered above their cabin, and scanned the landscape in the direction of Fort Apache.

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Buck snapped a shot at the Indian and spurred his horse. A dozen rocks came to life and sent death winging at him.

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

"Can't see hide nor hair of 'em," said Adams. "They either got blind drunk at the fort, or else they've got lost."

"Ja," Dutch agreed, "or maybe dose Indians got dem."

After a time, they turned and started clumping down the hill. Then Buck saw that their partners had come into camp through a valley to the south and were busily unloading the supplies.

"Ah! There they are," he said with relief. "Back safe."

Then below them, before their startled eyes, the brown rocks on all sides of their camp suddenly seemed to come to life and become brown Indians leaping upon their friends with murderous fury. Before Buck and Dutch could do more than drop behind clumps of sage and wonder what action to take, the fight was over, and their partners all lay dead.

Adams was unarmed and Brandel had only a small pistol with half a dozen rounds of ammunition. They feared that they might be discovered at any moment; yet they knew that it would be even more dangerous to move. They were forced to lie hidden and, sickened with fear and rage, watch the twenty or more savages loot their supplies, inflict nameless barbarities upon the bodies of their friends, and finally burn them with the cabin.

After dark, Buck and Dutch slipped away and set out on foot, without food or water, in what they thought was the direction of Fort Apache. For twelve days and nights they wandered to the southwest, suffering incredibly from hunger, thirst, and exposure, keeping alive only on the prairie dogs they occasionally managed to kill with Dutch's pistol.

THE hot desert sun blazed down upon them, withering their parched bodies, frying their brains, and giving the world a torturous sense of unreality. But the two men plodded on, stumbling, falling occasionally, but always rising again and staggering doggedly on. They grew weaker and weaker, becoming half delirious as death approached.

And then they were sighted and rescued by a scouting party from Fort West, far to the south of Fort Apache. The Army immediately sent out a punitive expedition against the Indians; it returned in a few days with an air of victory, half a dozen casualties—and eight sullen Apache prisoners.

As the troop jogged tiredly into the fort, Adams glared at the bedraggled prisoners, hating them for what they'd done to his friends, for the tortures they had made him suffer, and for the fortune in gold they'd caused him to lose. A bloody, unreasoning rage flamed through him. Cursing the Indians bitterly, he jerked a carbine from a trooper's hand and leveled it at one of the captives.

Lieutenant Emory and two troopers threw themselves upon Adams and wrested the rifle from him.

"We'll have none of that," snapped the Lieutenant.

"But he's wearing Steve O'Connor's shirt," Adams protested hotly. "I'd know it anywhere. Hell's fire, half of them've got stuff that belonged to my partners. Let's string the whole damned bunch up right now."

"They'll be punished when and how the Army sees fit," said Lieutenant Emory flatly, "and not without a trial."

"Yeah," Adams said. "You'll give 'em six months in Fort Yuma. Then turn 'em loose to kill someone else. I'll see they get what they deserve. Wait and see!"

Day by day, Adams grew more bitter. He was destitute, living on charity, and he felt that the Indians were being treated better than he. He asked the commandant of the fort to furnish him with an escort to recover the gold buried beneath the burned cabin. The commandant flatly refused and, further, sternly forbade him to enter Apache territory under any circumstances.

"They're afraid of antagonizing the Indians," Adams complained to Dutch bitterly. "But, hell's fire, even if they let us go, we got no guns or outfits—and no money to buy them with. Look, Dutch," he said, leaning toward his parner confidentially, "let's just help ourselves to guns and horses some dark night, slip away from the fort, and go get our gold."

Dutch drew away, fear clouding his broad, placid face. "Naw," he said. "Dot's stealing. Den dose soldiers and Indians, dey both be after us."

"What the hell?" Buck argued. "There's over a hundred thousand in gold there—already mined!"

"Ja," Dutch agreed, "but gold's no goot to a dead man."

Nothing Adams said changed his partner's mind. Dutch took a job herding cattle and, ironically, was killed some time later in a stampede.

Buck Adams, however, never wavered in his determination to get the gold. He stole a canteen, a few supplies, two army pistols, and the commandant's horse, the finest in the army stables, and hid them in a gully near the fort.

Then, unable to leave without taking revenge upon the Apaches who had massacred his partners, he scaled the stockade of the prisoners' compound. Silently, with a pistol in each hand, he approached their sleeping quarters. He broke off the lock and threw open the door.

"Come out, you red bastards, and get your medicine," he growled.

ALARMED, the Indians snatched up a few knives and improvised weapons they'd managed to conceal from the soldiers and crouched in the shadows. Buck, with a wild yell, leaped in among them, firing from both pistols. The Apaches tried to fight him off with knife and club, but they had little chance before two blazing six-guns. Nor did Buck intend that they should have more than they had given his partners.

He clubbed down the last two Indians with empty pistols and, bruised and bleeding in a dozen places, scrambled back over the stockade while the fort was boiling to life. Then, in the excitement and confusion, he got over the fort's outer wall, ran to the gully where he'd hidden the commandant's horse and, mounting, raced away into the desert.

First, he left a plain trail leading west, then, concealing his tracks, he cut back, heading northeast toward his hidden cache of gold. But the Indian telegraph had passed along the news that he had killed the captives, and for two hundred miles to the north and east, Apaches waited with savage fury for sight of the fugitive.

And Lieutenant Emory, in charge of one of the search detachments, correctly surmised his intentions, and beat him to Lost Creek, the only source of water for miles on his most probable route.

"If we don't get him here," Lieutenant Emory said to Sergeant Crawford, as they watered their horses before laying the ambush, "one of the other details is sure to get him. We've got all the water holes covered. He can't get away."

At that moment, Buck Adams rode over a small hillock.

Sergeant Crawford stiffened. "There he is," he rasped, reaching for his carbine.

Buck saw the troopers at the same instant and whirled his horse.

SERGEANT CRAWFORD and half a dozen troopers fired at the fleeing man, then spurred their tired horses in pursuit. But the commandant's horse, in spite of his weariness, was still the best horse in the regiment, and Buck finally eluded his pursuers, only to run into more trouble.

Near sunset he rode into an Apache ambush. The Indians had smeared themselves with dust and humped like rocks beside the trail. But the setting sun betrayed them, highlighting a savage countenance for Buck's watchful eyes.

He snapped a shot at the Indian and

(Continued on page 39)

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WILD PLACES CALLING

Floyd Bousman astride the ol' corral fence.

Publisher's Note: In the summer of 1954, our editor Fred Gipson, along with his half-pint wife, Tommie, and their knot-head boys, Mike 13 and Beck 8, took a two-month auto tour of the West. Along the way, Fred was moved from time to time to take typewriter in hand and knock out his own personal reactions to certain sights, scenes and family travel adventures. In the following sketch, he tells what it is like to be high up in the rugged Wind River Mountains, encamped on North Fork Creek with our good friend Floyd Bousman, pack outfitter, who operates out of Pinedale, Wyoming. Other sketches will follow.

Tommie, Mike and Beck look over some mighty pretty fishing waters.

Ol' Fred sizes up his mount—and vice versa.

ALWAYS I have been lured by the wild places. All my life I have felt that I belonged to them. More and more, I've come to feel that only in such remote regions of primitive isolation does life have any real significance.

There is no reason or logic to this. I realize how ill-fitted I am, physically and mentally, for continued existence in such rigorous surroundings. It is fairly obvious that the man of forty-six who is still floundering, still blindly groping for the answers, is no longer very likely to find them anywhere.

But when did reason and common sense have anything to do with emotion? For me, the wild places are like whiskey to an alcoholic. I'm forever being hounded by the craving to seek out and explore them. I'm also forever being frustrated by my inability to obtain the money and time necessary to such indulgence.

All of which may give some idea of what our trip into the Wind River Mountains meant to me. There, for a few brief days, I was able to live in harmony with myself and my surroundings, freed of the irritations and mind-muddling complexities of modern civilized living.

But now, looking back on it, I find myself like a hop-head coming off a marijuana binge; I'm well aware of the dream-like pleasure I knew, but decidedly hazy as to the events that transpired during that sensuous period of release.

However, from the clutter of fogged recollections there emerge a few sights, incidents, and impressions that will probably remain with me for a long time. . . .

THERE was the time that Beck stood on a low rounded boulder at the edge of a pool and laid his fly out into the swirling clear water. A trout struck savagely. Beck set his hook. The trout leaped high, churning the water into white froth as he charged across the pool's surface, all but running on his tail.

Beck's rod was arched and quivering with strain. Beck's young body was arched and quivering with elation.

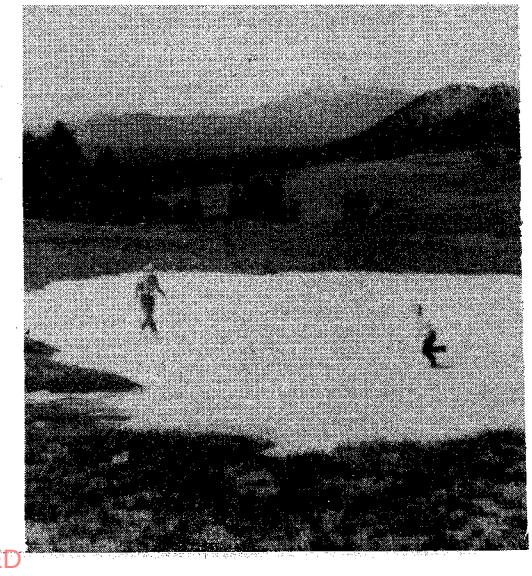
"I got him! I got him! I got him!" he cried.

"Oh, if only I had my camera loaded!" Tommie wailed from the shore.

Mike, gloating over his catch.

Young Beck, casting the hard way.

The boys find a patch of snow to frolic in.



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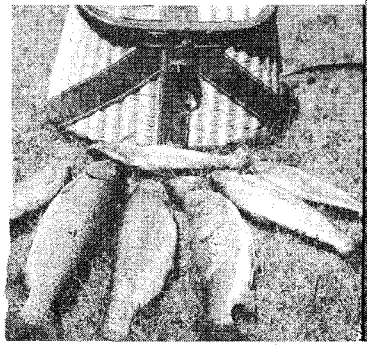
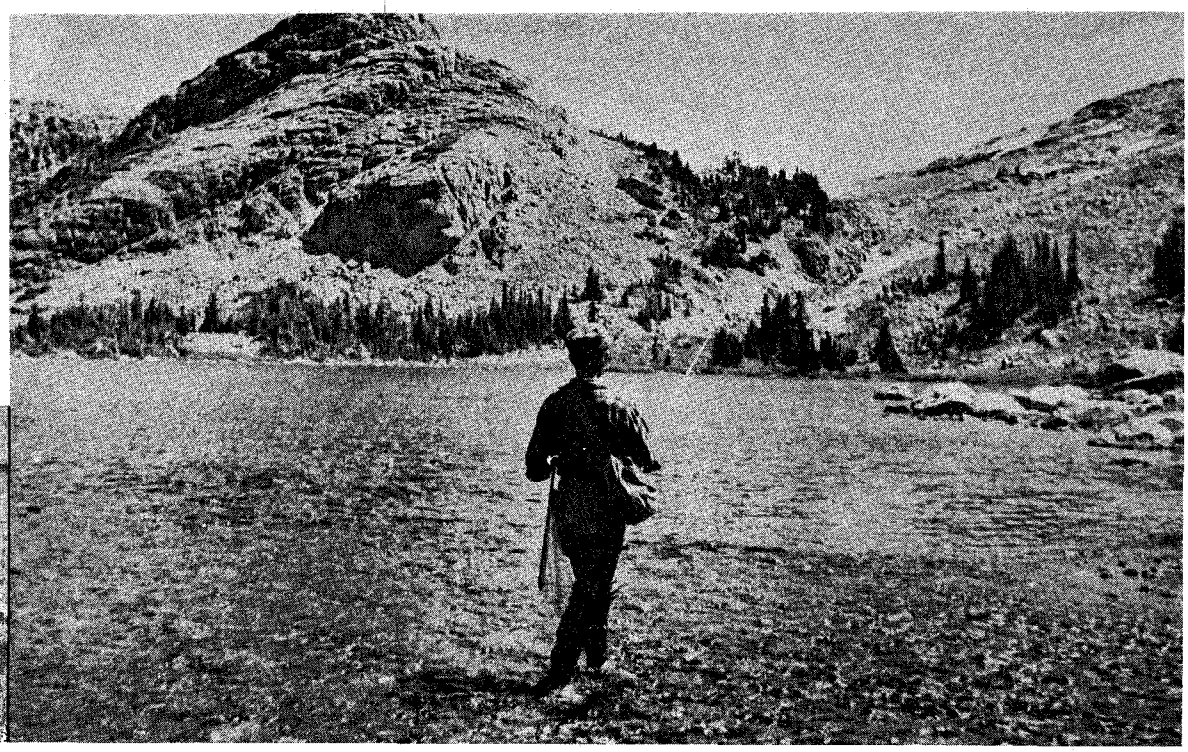
By FRED GIPSON

WYOMING





Rainbow trout—the best eating in the world—straight from a fisherman's paradise in Wyoming's Wind River Mountains.

She should have had it loaded. For a brief instant there, she might have captured the very essence of all that's joyful and vigorous and dramatic about being young.

I laughed at her. To have captured the scene on film would have been wonderful. But to have captured it in the mind, as we both had, was even better.

* * *

There was the day that it rained. We couldn't fish; so we gathered in the cook tent and kept a fire going and ate and talked and drank some Scotch and talked some more.

The talk ran to fishing, to hunting bear and moose and elk and wild turkeys and pheasant. It took up politics and horses and war and religion, Beck's ability to fill his wading boots with icy water every time he fished, Mike's habit of "talking in" every trout he hooked, and how best to doctor Jim Williams' leg, which had become so swollen from mosquito bites that he was forced to cripple around on an improvised crutch.

We discussed the golden trout that Bousman had planted in a small lake above timberline. For some curious reason, the trout had grown to weigh eight and ten pounds in Wyoming waters; where in California, their native home, they seldom ran better than one to two pounds. And, according to Bousman, when the California State Fish and Game officials learned of this, they'd immediately shoved through legislation making it unlawful to transport live golden trout across the state line. They couldn't see any point to furnishing other states with trout that might lure fishermen away from their home state.

It was all good talk, intensely interesting and entertaining; but gradually it played out, and one by one, we dug out books and magazines and newspapers and began reading.

All, that is, except the young horse- and dude-wrangler Cash Sloat. He sat in puzzled silence on a pile of wood beside the stove. He pondered the group of readers ringing the kitchen table until he could stand it no longer. Finally, he rose, shaking his head in disgust.

"I'll be damned," he muttered, "if this ain't the out-reading-est bunch I ever seen in the woods."

Then he stalked out of the tent into the chill rain.

* * *

THERE was the night that the cold shut down.

It crept into our tent, into my bedding, into the very marrow of my bones. I rolled out, shivering, to put on all the clothes I had, to build a fire of wet wood by flashlight, finally to distribute my bedding among the family. I spent the rest of the night squatted on my heels before the fire, what time I wasn't stomping around in the moonlight searching for wood.

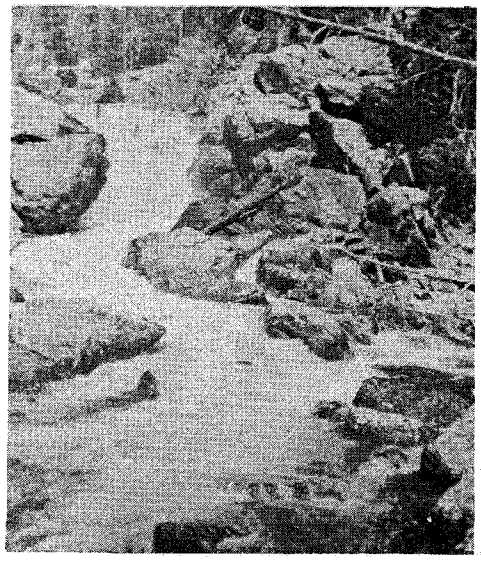
I'll long remember that night. Not because of my physical discomfort, but for the mystic beauty that the moonlight made of the mountains.

From between the black and lofty peaks, long bars of pale silver light slanted down, gleaming on the snowbanks, glittering on the bare wet rocks, sparkling on the frost-encrusted grass, glowing on the wisps of fog rising from the still pools, and glimmering on the shoaling creek water racing past our camp.

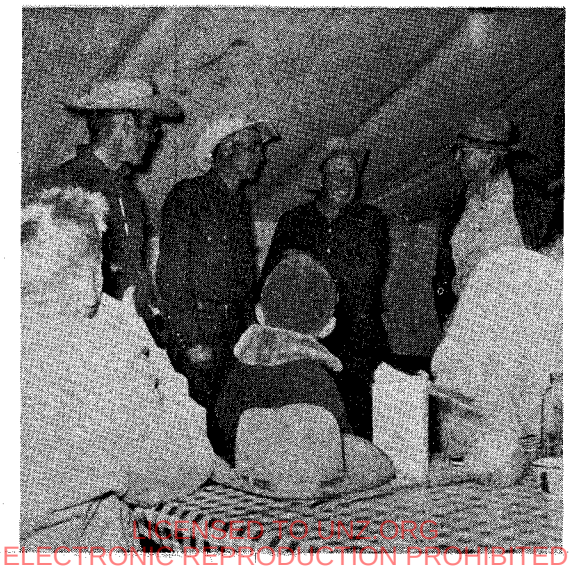
It was such a wild and arresting sight that I kept having to leave the warmth of the tent to go out and stand and shiver and gaze on it some more.

(Continued on page 37)

Nothing prettier than a mountain stream tumbling picturesquely over rocks.



The biggest ones are always caught in camp after the day's fishing.



Rough going—but safe enough with these sure-footed mounts.

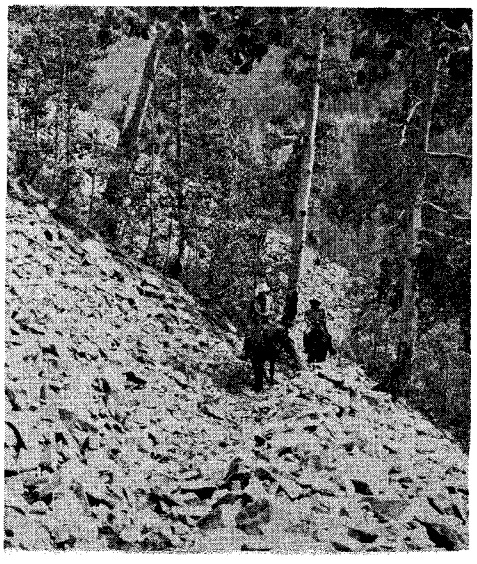


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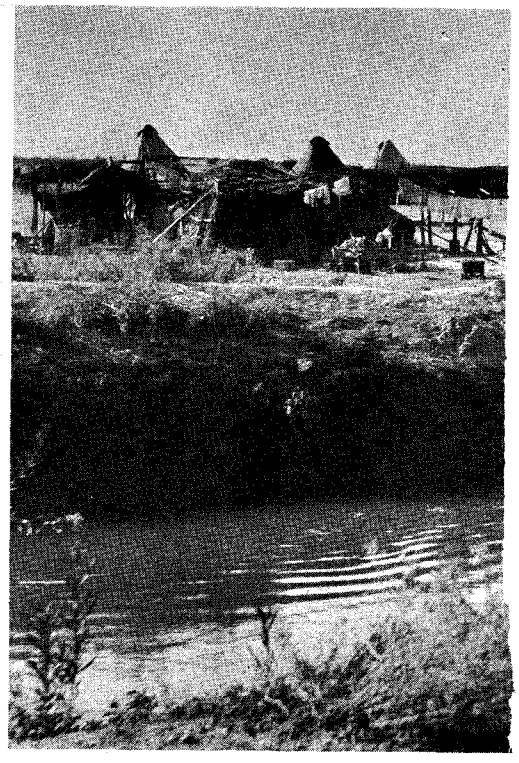
Photo Courtesy McLaughlin & Co., Phoenix, Ariz.

Young Hopi braves in ceremonial attire.



A Maricopa Indian woman washes her

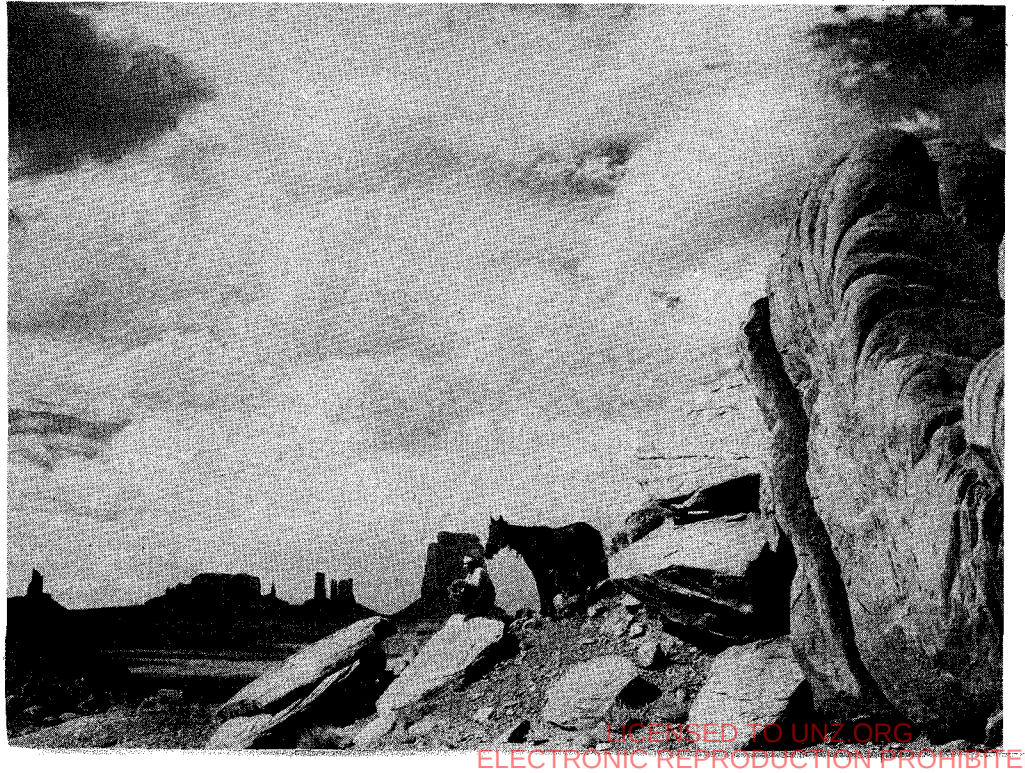
The writer of this article is a member of the Cheyenne tribe. He earnestly believes that the white people—and, in particular, white children—should

KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIANS

By SAM DICKE

Navajo in typical Navajo country—rocks, clouds, and far-flung spaces.

Photo Courtesy McLaughlin & Co., Phoenix, Ariz.



IT is a matter of deep regret to my people that most material published about Indians is either sentimentally unrealistic or harshly untrue. Indians were and are neither ignorant and bloodthirsty savages nor misunderstood heroes, as most white writers depict them. Indians are human beings like all the peoples of the earth, living interesting, normal lives in accordance with customs and beliefs which are prehistoric in origin—but greatly modified by several hundred years of contact with white people. You and your children are entitled to know your Indian neighbors as they *really* are.

We believe in "America First" just as the white men believe. After all, we were the *first* Americans and we are proud of the fact. We, therefore, ask your schoolteachers to instruct your children properly—to tell them the *truth* about the first Americans.

We do not know if school histories are inaccurate in all particulars, but we *do* know that they are vastly unjust to the American Indian. These history books call all white victories battles, and all Indian victories massacres. The Custer battle, for example, is still being taught to school children as a frightful massacre—a dark blot on the Indian past. We ask that the Custer fight, along with other incidents, be impartially told. Armed white men attacked an Indian camp, and the Indians fought back. If this constitutes a massacre, then what was Wounded Knee? One seldom reads of censure being directed at the soldiers who brutally shot down Indian men, women, and children at Wounded Knee. Why?

History books teach that Indians were murderers—but is it murder to fight in self-defense? Let us examine some of these so-called "murders." Indians killed white men because the whites destroyed the buffaloes—the red man's sole means of support. White men penned our people on reservations—then took away the reservations and gave the land to the settlers. Yes, some of the Indians fought to save their land—fought in vain.

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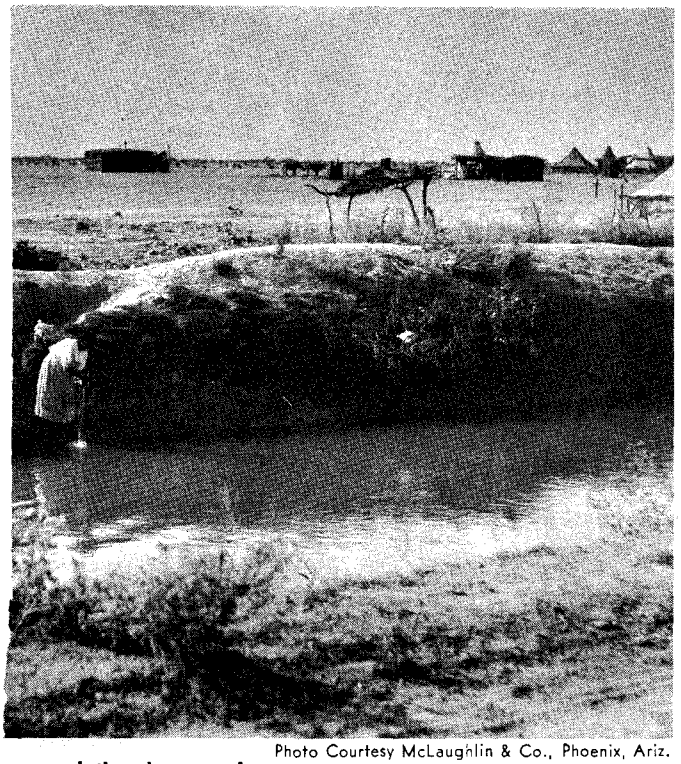

Photo Courtesy McLaughlin & Co., Phoenix, Ariz.

clothes in a creek near camp.

Photo Courtesy McLaughlin & Co., Phoenix, Ariz.

A splendid photographic study of three Sioux—the famed "Warriors of the North Plains."

It is ironic that white men who rose to protect their property were called heroes and patriots: Indians who did the same were branded fiends and murderers. The white men called the Indian treacherous—but no mention is made of broken treaties on the part of the whites.

White men claim that Indians were always fighting—yet it was largely through our lack of skill in the art of white man's warfare that we were defeated. An Indian mother prayed that her boy would be a great medicine man (doctor) or a wise councillor rather than a great warrior. It is true that we had our own small battles, but in the main we were peace-loving and home-loving. White men called Indians thieves; yet we lived in frail skin lodges and needed no locks nor iron bars to protect us.

We were called uncivilized barbarians —but what is civilization? It is distinguished by a noble religion and philosophy, original arts, stirring music, rich story and legend. We had all these. Then, in incontrovertible fact, we were not savages but a civilized race.

WE made blankets that the white man, with all his ingenuity and intricate machinery, has never been able to duplicate. We made sturdy baskets that were also beautiful. We wove designs, in beads and colored quills, that were not mere decorative motifs, but were the outward expression of our very thoughts. We made pottery that was useful and beautiful as well. School children should be acquainted with these fine handicrafts in which the Indian was skilled. Indian blankets, baskets, and pottery should be exhibited in every school. The work of foreign artisans is studied and imitated in schools; the work of native American artisans is largely neglected.

The Indians sang songs that carried in their melodies all the sounds of nature; the running of waters, the sighing winds, the calls of birds and animals. Teach our songs to your children, that they may come to love nature as we love it.

We had our statesmen—and their oratory has never been equaled. Teach your children some of these great speeches of the Indian people, remarkable for their moving eloquence. They speak in rolling cadence of the glory and the tragedy of our people.

We had our lighter moments, too. We played games that helped to build good health and sound bodies. Why not put these games into your schools? We told stories. Why not teach school children the wholesome proverbs and legends of our people? Tell them how we loved all that was beautiful; that we killed game only for food, not for sport. Indians think white men who kill for sport are murderers!

Tell your children of the friendly acts of Indians to the white people who first settled in this country. Tell them of our leaders and heroes and their deeds. Tell them of Indians such as Black Partridge, Shobbona, and others, who many times saved the people of Chicago at great danger to themselves.

Put in your history books the Indian's part in both World Wars. Tell how the Indian fought for a country of which he was not a citizen, for a flag to which he had no claim, and for a people that had treated him unjustly.

THE Indian has long been hurt by these cruel injustices. Yet we do not wish to forever re-live the bitterness of the past; we ask only that our story be told fairly. We do not ask your historians to overlook nor condone our deeds; but we do ask that they try to *understand* them. Only then may an impartial picture be presented.

The aborigines of no nation have a

(Continued on page 36)

Since time immemorial, the Plains Indians have recorded tribal history on buffalo robes such as this one.

Frontier Pix

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PIONEER MOTHER

TEXAS

By MABEL T. QUEBEDEAUX

Her only chance to save her three-year-old son was to escape the Indians and get back to the settlements and the Texas Rangers.

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LOECHEL

AUTHOR'S NOTE:
This story is true. It was related by Washington Anderson, who was at that time a member of the Ranger forces. This incident occurred in 1836. The Indian camp was on the banks of Waller Creek, at a spot now within the campus of the University of Texas. M. T. Q.

"MA, come help me!"

The frantic wail came from a frightened little boy, tied to the back of a wild mule in an Indian camp. He was three-year-old John McSherry. The Indians had kept the child in this uncomfortable position since his capture two days before. Each time he cried out, Sarah Hibbins, his mother, moaned in agony, for she was unable to help him.

The Hibbins party had consisted of John Hibbins; Sarah, his wife; John McSherry, her son by a former marriage; an infant, Hibbins' child; and George Creath, Sarah's brother. John Hibbins had met the others in Houston, Texas, as they returned from a visit to Sarah's former home in Tennessee. Their destination had been the Hibbins' homestead in DeWitt's Colony. Gonzales, Texas, had been founded prior to this time in DeWitt's Colony.

After Hibbins' wagon had crossed the Colorado River near their home, it was surrounded by Indians. The two men were killed and scalped. Sarah, with the baby in her arms, was tied upon the back of a mule. John, her older son, was lashed to a second mule.

Two days later, the Indians with their three captives recrossed the Colorado River and moved toward their regular camping place farther north. Late in the afternoon temporary camp was made on the banks of Waller Creek, now within the city of Austin, Texas.

Sarah was permitted to dismount from the mule. Her stiffened arms clasped her baby. Food had been scantily provided, but there had not been enough for either mother or child. The baby cried, and Sarah tried to comfort it. An Indian started menacingly toward them. Sarah clutched the baby closer. The warrior scowled and snatched the infant from her. As the Indian stalked away with the child, Sarah ran beside him and begged for her baby's return. His rough push sent her sprawling to the ground. While she regained her feet, the warrior strode to a tree, and, catching the skirts of the baby in his hands, he beat out its brains against the tree before the horror-stricken eyes of its mother. He then disappeared among the trees, still carrying the baby's body. Half-fainting, Sarah fell to the ground.

From semiconsciousness the distraught mother heard John calling, "Ma, come help me!" Grimly she fought off the blackness threatening to engulf her, for she knew John's only chance of survival depended upon her.

The Indians did not make Sarah work with the squaws as the evening meal was prepared. She was treated as a captive, being forced to remain in one place and not go near John. One kind Indian woman brought food to Sarah, but—feeling as if she never wished to eat again—she refused it. Then John called again for help, and that reminded her that food was necessary if she were to keep up her strength. Sarah forced down as much food as she could.

JOHN was still tied upon the mule, which was staked within the circle of firelight so the Indians could amuse themselves watching the terrified child. The braves laughed and joked, watching the wild mule trying to bite John's feet. The poor child could do nothing to protect himself with hands and feet securely tied. His cries for his mother only increased the Indians' merriment. After a time the warriors tired of the cruel sport, and motioned for one of the girls to take food to the little boy. His hands, when untied, were so stiff he spilled most of the food, but he managed to swallow some of it.

The chief barked a guttural order, and the Indians set about preparing for the night. The leader motioned toward Sarah, and then for two of the warriors to bring a buffalo robe. They motioned Sarah to lie down on the ground. They then spread the robe over her body, stretched it tightly and lay down, one at one end and one at the other. In this manner, the captive was effectively trapped. Any move she made would awaken her guards.

THINKING fast as the Indians stretched the robe across her body, Sarah raised herself slightly, thus raising the taut robe a little too. This maneuver was unnoticed by the Indians. The firelight was dying out and their senses were dulled, for they had been drinking liquor they had stolen. Sarah kept herself in the strained position while the warriors settled on each side. Her greatest worry was whether she could hold this position until the Indians were asleep. After a seemingly interminable interval, she felt she would have to relax. Just then John called again, and his pitiful cry acted as a powerful restorative. She exerted all her will power in an effort not to relax.

The liquor began to take effect, and her two guards slept. Sarah relaxed cautiously, but held the robe taut with her hands while she rested her aching back.

She dared not wait long, for her attempt at escape had to be made before the drunken Indians awoke. Still holding the robe taut, Sarah began inching her way out. One of her guards coughed—and she froze instantly. Her breath came back when he turned over and slept again. She was nearly out from under the robe when the second guard groaned and muttered in his sleep. Again Sarah became immobile, but the warrior did not awaken.

Knowing that the Indians would awaken the instant the robe slackened, Sarah—while still holding the robe taut—felt

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Holding the buffalo robe taut, Sarah began inching her way out. One of her guards coughed—and she froze instantly.

around on the ground and found a large rock. This she gently edged under the robe, and breathed a silent prayer that the drunken Indians would not discover the deception until she was far away.

Now Sarah paused, swiftly pondering what action she should take next. John drooped in exhausted slumber on the mule's back, a guard sleeping nearby. Even if she could reach John and untie him, he would be so stiff he could not walk.

She could not hope to carry the child and get them safely away. On the other hand, if she left her helpless little son, would this be taking away his last chance for survival? If the Indians caught her trying to escape, they would punish her brutally—perhaps even kill her. If they awoke to find her gone, they might injure the child. Nevertheless, she must chance these risks. Carefully, placing each foot soundlessly, she crept through the trees surrounding the camp and away from the dull red glow of the dying fire.

Sarah knew approximately where the different settlements were located. Hornsby Bend should not be far from this place. The settlers there would help her, and try to rescue John. Waller Creek curved, and she was not sure of her directions. Heavy clouds covered the stars, and the ominous feel of an approaching Texas norther was in the air.

All night long, Sarah fought her way through the brush, hair catching, clothes tearing, but with eyes protected as much as possible. Once, soon after starting out, she thought she heard John calling her—or was it only her tortured imagination? She hurried along as fast as she could, knowing that the Indians would awaken as soon as the norther arrived.

EARLY next morning, she emerged from her hideaway in the brush and discovered to her horror that she was still within sight of the Indians' camp. In trying to efface her tracks by wading in Waller Creek, she had evidently circled the camp. Sarah tried not to think of her fate if the Indians recaptured her. She began pushing as rapidly as possible toward the gray light of the coming day, desperately hoping that this was the way to Hornsby Bend.

The norther came in all its chill fury, but Sarah continued to wade in streams as long as they did not take her away from her eastward path. The cold water numbed her legs, but she rested only when it became impossible to go further.

No one knows why the Indians did not follow and recapture her. Perhaps the bitter norther deterred them. More likely, they figured a mere woman was not worth the effort.

By afternoon, Sarah was so close to utter exhaustion she could barely force her legs to carry her onward. Rest was a vital necessity, but there was no safe place to rest. The time came when she could not move forward. A spot nearby, among rocks sheltered by brush, would afford a screen from searching eyes. Sarah crept in between two rocks beneath the brush and slept.

A sound awakened her . . . the Indians? *Something* was coming toward her hiding place—something large and frightening. Bushes crackled and small stones rolled and rattled as it approached. Sarah huddled back between the rocks, for now heavy breathing could be heard. The beast, whatever it was, was at the entrance of her little sanctuary now. And then Sarah cried out in relief, for it was only a cow! Startled, the creature galloped clumsily away to join other cattle in the valley.

Sarah hastily scrambled out, and ran toward the spooky cattle. The faster she ran to catch up with them, the faster they ran away. Sarah felt she *must* keep up with them, for cattle meant settlers somewhere near at hand. Suddenly she remembered that cattle, like horses, fear Indians—maybe they thought she was an Indian! She slowed to a walk, and the cattle began to graze as they moved toward home. Cautiously, she followed them.

Now Sarah heard the ring of an axe in the distance. With her last remaining strength, she hallooed to attract the attention of the wood-choppers. The settlers, hearing her cries, believed them to be the cries of Indians. Hastily they gathered up their tools and hurried to their homes.

(Continued on page 40)

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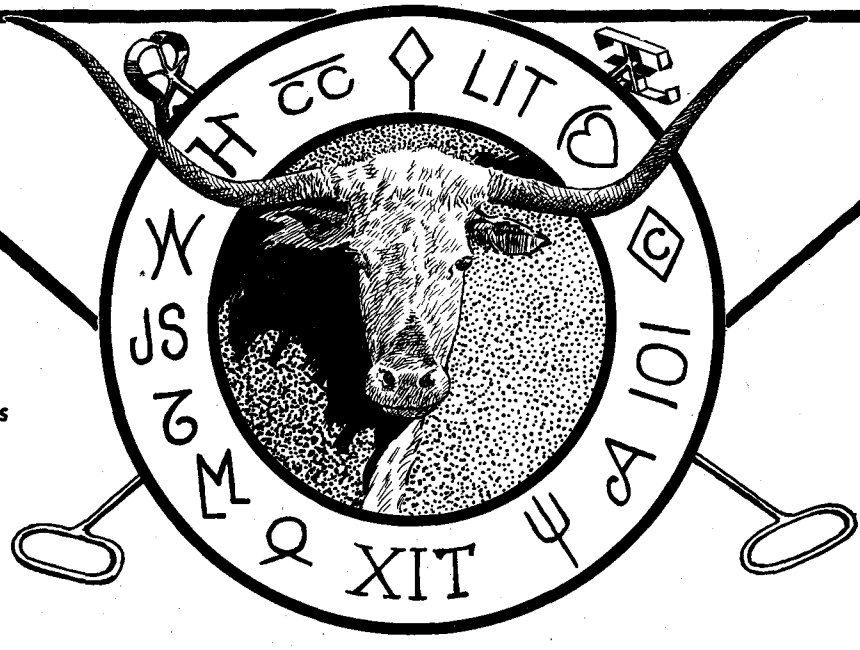
Action, dust, and the smell of burning hair marks branding operations. It's a lot of hard work and long hours. Two flankers (rustlers, as they were called) were required to take the calf off the rope. The brander was called "the iron man." Another cowboy tended the iron fire.

TALES OF THE BRANDING IRON



Branding iron tales are almost as many *and varied as the types* of brands burnt into the hides of living cattle.

By
EUGENE
CHRISMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY
B. D. TITSWORTH

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THERE are thousands of tales of the branding iron. Some are of romance, some of good luck and bad, of hardships and danger, of gunplay, bloodshed and sudden death. All have the salty and earthy flavor of the West about them.

There is the tale of Jess Hitson, the Colorado cowboy who vanished mysteriously one day in 1868. This is also the tale of what was probably the most unusual brand ever burned on the hide of a cow brute. In 1870-71, cowboys riding the range in Colorado began to catch brief glimpses of a half-wild steer. On its gaunt side this brand had been burned:

7-4-68
Hot as Hell
J. H.

Not until 1874 was the mystery of the brand and of Jess Hitson's disappearance solved. An Indian murdered a white man in Pueblo and was sentenced to be hanged. Before he went to the scaffold, he confessed that he and two other Indians, all drunk, had come upon Jess Hitson about to brand a steer. They needed money for more whiskey, so they killed the cowboy and sold his horse to a wandering band of Utes. They buried his saddle, saddle blanket and bridle in a deep gully, covering it with earth and large stones. It was surmised that Hitson had burned the strange brand on the steer when he saw that the jig was up.

Western humor is often salty but seldom subtle. Range men are not usually addicted to obscenity or vulgarity, but they do like tales with a bit of spice in them, as this one will prove. A man moved into Arizona and settled on a remote piece of land. Soon he became known as the laziest man in the state, but his herd kept increasing, possibly because he was throwing too wide a loop or rustling. But there was no proof, so the other ranchers tolerated him. One day he asked a neighboring rancher to suggest an appropriate brand for him. The rancher smiled and drew this design in the dust with a stick, 2NP You won't have much trouble reading it or detecting the humor in it if you'll just remember that in brand language any numeral or letter lying on its side is "lazy."

The cleverness and perfidity of a pretty girl was responsible for the following tale. A man named Plunkett came to West Texas and bought a ranch, bringing his very pretty daughter, Lillybelle, with him. Pretty girls were as scarce as hen's teeth in West Texas then, so soon every cowboy in seven counties was courting Lillybelle. The competition got so hot that one waddy decided to get the jump on the others. He began branding some of the mavericks he roped with the letters, *LIL,* an abbreviation of the girl's first name. The others caught on and started doing the same thing. Lillybelle soon had a sizable herd started. But, instead of marrying any of the cowboys, she sent East for the man who had been waiting to marry her all the time. They got their start in ranching at the expense of a lot of lovesick cowpokes.

THEN there was the man who was traveling through New Mexico in search of a ranch site. One night a hungry stray dog crept into his camp. He fed the dog. When he woke up next morning, he found that he was camped on an ideal ranch site. His brand became the *Damned Hungry Dog,* GD Another man, looking for a place to start a ranch, lost everything but his two Colt .45's in a poker game. On the money he borrowed on these he started a ranch and prospered. His brand is the *Four-Five Connected,* 45 . A Douglas, Arizona, veterinarian named Dr. F. F. Schmidt worked around the pens where Mexican cattle going into the United States were dipped and vaccinated. He started buying up animals who had broken their legs in the confusion of the pens, setting the bones, and turning them out on his ranch. Soon he had a sizable spread, and his brand, appropriately enough, was the *Crutch* brand.

Cow country history tells of but one woman who was branded and she not with a branding iron but with a gold concho. "Bully Bob" Bascom was a Nevada rancher and big-time gambler who liked show and ostentation so much that he had his gold conchos made into replicas of his *RB Connected* RB brand. Suzette, a Reno prostitute, took a fancy to Bascom and went to live with him. All went well until a man whom Suzette liked better than Bob came along. When Bascom learned what was happening, he ran the man out of town at the end of his six-gun and returned to the house. There he took a gold concho from his bridle, heated it in the stove, and branded Suzette on the cheek. They were married the next day, and Suzette never looked at another man.

The King Ranch in South Texas is today the largest and most famous ranch in the world. It covers an area larger than many European countries, and the combined value of the 130,000 head of cattle and horses there would be a greater fortune than is contained in the treasuries of many countries. The King cattle and horses wear this brand , which is called the *Running W* by some and the *Little Snake* by others. In the old days the Capitol Syndicate was known as the "Ten in Texas" ranch because it spread over ten vast Texas counties, some of them larger than our New England states. It was founded by salty, profane old BarBQ Collins who once paid five thousand dollars to a rustler who had been imprisoned for rustling XIT cattle to tell him how he had successfully altered this brand XIT . This is how he did it,

The CK ranch was founded by a man named Conrad Kohrs near Deer Lodge, Montana, in 1862. At one time it shipped more cattle to the famous Union Stock Yards in Chicago than any other ranch in the Northwest, but in the great blizzards of 1886-87 it lost 52,000 head of steers. The loss was so great that the CK gradually declined in size and importance till it vanished.

California had many great ranchos and among them was the Santa Margarita near the San Luis Rey Mission, and the El Tejon near Bakersfield. The Santa Margarita cattle wore this brand: ; those of the El Tejon this one . The cattle on both of these ranches were so numerous that it was impossible to make a full count of them. Then, coming later, was the Miller-Lux ranch, whose holdings were once so vast that a trail herd could start in Washington state and never graze except off Miller-Lux grass until it reached Central California. Their brand was the *H and S Wrench* HS .

MOST famous of the later-day ranches was the Miller Brothers 101 near Blackwell, Oklahoma. It was not as large as some of the earlier ranches, covering only 2,000,000 acres, but its fame was spread all over the world by the Miller Brothers Wild West Show.

The largest ranch ever to exist on the North American continent was owned not by an American but by a Mexican named Don Luis Terraza. The Don's ranch spread over 6,000,000 acres and at one time 400,000 head of cattle were counted in a round-up, although it was known that the count was short. Five great *haciendas* were built on it and thousands of *peons* and *vaqueros* and their numerous offspring lived and worked on it.

The Don had a sense of humor. Once, while he was visiting El Paso, an American stock buyer new to the Southwest asked him, *"Senor,* could you deliver to me 4,000 head of prime steers within 24 hours?"

"Four thousand?" The old Don smiled. "Yes, I believe I could, if you'd let me know what color you want them."

As long as Porfirio Diaz ruled in Mexico, the Terrazas ranch prospered but when he was deposed it was confiscated. Don Terraza died in the United States in 1923. Cowboys always insisted that the brand could be called the *THS,* but Don Terraza stated that he had designed it only because it pleased his eye. It looked like this: THS

There is a suspicion that the famous "Hashknife" brand, immortalized by W. C. Tuttle with his stories of "Hashknife" Hartley, originated in the following manner. The man who owned the land that was later to become the "Hashknife" ranch was a huge and domineering individual who frequently terrorized his small, frail wife by making threats of violence and mayhem on her person.

For years, his wife endured these threats silently. Then, like the proverbial worm, she turned on her spouse and with a hashknife tried to make hash of him. He subdued her easily. Later his latent and long-absent sense of humor overbalanced his anger and astonishment and he made the hashknife his brand.

The Rocking R brand came into being when the owner of an Oklahoma ranch was thrown from a horse and so injured that he was forced thereafter to direct the activities of his ranch from a rocking chair.

The Double O brand was devised by a heartbroken husband, whose wife was killed by Indians soon after they had settled on their ranch. The brand symbolizes their two wedding rings.

The Guitar brand was established by a young New Mexico rancher who had wooed and won his beautiful Mexican wife by serenading her with that instrument.

The Broken Arrow brand was used by a Colorado rancher whose wagon train had been attacked by Indians. During the fight an arrow struck the butt of his rifle and broke, thus saving his life.

The famous Texas brand, the Barbecue, BQ , was used because of the owner's inordinate fondness for meat cooked in that fashion.

The Bar V M brand was devised and used by a Wyoming rancher as a memorial to the sweetheart of his youth who had died before they could be married. His name was Marvin and hers Virginia.

This is the last of our tales of the branding iron. One night

(Continued on page 40)

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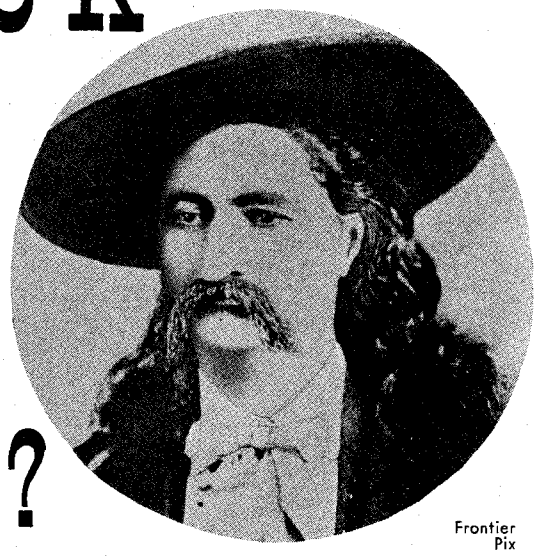
HICKOK-HERO OR HEEL?



Frontier Pix

Wild Bill Hickok, as he appeared when Marshal of Abilene, Kansas, in 1871. Photo shows Hickok at the zenith of his checkered career.

Well, we asked for it and we got it! We stuck our necks out by publishing Ray Stevens' article, HICKOK THE HERO, in the December issue of TRUE WEST. Ever since the piece appeared in print, the admirers and detractors of Wild Bill have been letting us have both barrels of their shootin' irons. Below are a few samples.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The hottest controversial figure of the Old West—with the possible exception of Wyatt Earp—is James Butler (Wild Bill) Hickok. It seems that with Hickok there is no middle ground of opinion—you either hate the guy as a long-haired phony or love him as a frontier hero. The reader comment published here is typical of the flood of mail received by TRUE WEST on the Stevens article.

To the Editor of TRUE WEST:

Concerning an article in the December, 1955, issue of TRUE WEST:

This piece claims to be an article debunking Wild Bill Hickok, The greatest of all gun-fighters. Instead, it seems that the article can stand a little debunking itself. Author Stevens says that McCanles' name was James. This is wrong, for his name was David C. McCanles. Point 2: If a woman was involved, causing the trouble between Wild Bill and McCanles, it was a girl named Sarah Shull and certainly not Mrs. Wellman. Point 3: Stevens speaks of McCanles besting Hickok in a wrestling match and making him say "uncle." If this wrestling match did occur—and it is doubtful that it did—Hickok couldn't have been able to defend himself very well. The reason for this is that Wild Bill had been sent to Rock Creek to recover from wounds suffered in fighting a bear while he was a driver for the famous freighters, Majors and Russell.

Point 4: Stevens calls McCanles' son William, whereas his name was actually Monroe. Point 5: About the McCanles faction being unarmed—why that debunks itself! Men like McCanles just didn't go about unarmed in those days, and surely he wouldn't go unarmed if bad blood existed between himself and Hickok. Point 6: I doubt that Wild Bill ever claimed to kill fifteen or sixteen soldiers in Hays City. Four would be the correct number, as agreed on by most historians, among them Wilstach and Connelly. Point 7: Hickok did not shoot Phil Coe in the back; in fact, Coe fired first. Neither did Wild Bill use derringers. Point 8: The part about Ben Thompson backing down Hickok is pure bunk, purely Thompson's own word—and I wouldn't give two cents for a cheap, two-bit gunman's word.

To continue: The part about Wyatt Earp backing down Thompson is unnecessary in the story. It could be true, but Thompson backing down Hickok—hogwash!

In conclusion: A debunking article is okay when the character deserves to be debunked, such as Jesse James or Billy the Kid. But I fail to see the reason for telling untruths about the courageous lawmen who helped build our great country. Perhaps Mr. Stevens believes what he has written; we all are entitled to our opinions. Here are my opinions: Wild Bill Hickok ranks as the greatest marshal and gun-fighter that ever lived. TRUE WEST is still the best magazine on the market today.—George Hart, 140 Ritner Street, Philadelphia 48, Pa.

Far-off England Springs to Hickok's Defense

Dear Editor:

Despite its ironic title, the article on Wild Bill Hickok is almost pure fabrication . . . With all due respect to Mr. Stevens, I must honestly say, after reading his article, that he obviously does not appear to know much about Hickok. This is proved by his very inaccurate account of the Hickok-McCanles affair.

I will put forward the following *facts* to debunk Mr. Stevens' article:

First, it seems obvious that Colonel George Ward Nichols, who was responsible for the *Harper's* article, invented everything but the fact that there was a killing. True, there were only three men involved and not ten—but the large odds made for a thrilling story. Nichols received his information from Hickok in 1865, but did not publish his article until 1867. Hickok was furious when he read the article—it made him look a fool.

Mr. Stevens makes no mention of Kate Shell (Sarah Shull), who was the woman in the affair and not Mrs. Wellman. McCanles' first name was David; not James.

McCanles was forced to leave Watauga County when it was found he had been taking monies entrusted to him in his capacity as sheriff. He took with him Sarah Shull (Kate Shell). She was his mistress. When Hickok arrived at Rock Creek, he (Hickok) became interested in the woman, stirring up a jealous hatred in McCanles.

McCanles *was* armed—if not with his usual pistols, then he was carrying a shotgun when he came to the ranchhouse. He spoke to Wellman when he arrived, not Mrs. Wellman. McCanles was after rent for the month of June, or provisions in the same amount. When Wellman informed him that neither would be forthcoming, he was furious. His ranting caused Wellman to fear for his life. He discounted Hickok as being still too weak from a recent fight with a bear to defend himself. It is stated by some writers that Hickok shot McCanles from *behind* the curtain dividing the interior of the cabin. This is sheer nonsense. True, Wild Bill had placed a rifle and two pistols behind the curtain, but that was because he expected trouble from McCanles.

Mr. Stevens further omits to say that Hickok used the McCanles shotgun when he chased Gordon. Hickok did not shoot Gordon to death; one of the bystanders was told to put him out of his misery to prove which side he was on. Woods was killed by a hoe in the hands of Mrs. Wellman or Sarah Shull. I can find no definite evidence on this. Most certainly it was not Wellman himself.

Leaving the McCanles affair, let us look at the Abilene incident. Here, Mr. Stevens must have used a comic book for his description of Ben Thompson making Hickok leave town. This is utter stupidity. I would like to point out that Hickok, in June or July of 1871, was ordered by the city council to force Thompson and Coe to bring their card tables out front, to prevent crookedness. This he did. Also, Mr. Stevens forgets to mention Hickok forcing Thompson to paint over certain parts of the anatomy of the bull pictured outside his Bull's

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Head Tavern. Thompson never forgave Wild Bill for this.

Thompson was out of town when Coe was killed by Hickok on October 5, 1871. Hickok and Williams were at the Novelty when Coe fired his shot. (The dog story was just an excuse. I feel). Witnesses heard Hickok say to Williams: "Stay here, and don't move. I'll handle this!" He ran through the Alamo Saloon from the back and emerged out front where he confronted Coe and asked him what he had shot at. Coe is said to have replied: "At a dog—and you're next!" Coe fired at Hickok and grazed his side. Hickok whipped out his Navy Colts, cross-draw fashion, and put two slugs in Coe's abdomen, with the exclamation: "I've shot too low!" At that moment, a figure dashed up behind him. Quite naturally he imagined it was another enemy, and whirled and dropped a man flashing two guns. It was Mike Williams.

Hickok went berserk when he realized he had killed his friend. He cleared the town with a shotgun under his arm. Williams was the last man to die at Hickok's hand.

Ben Thompson, lying on his back with a broken leg sustained in a carriage accident, threatened to kill Hickok when he heard of the shooting of Coe. It is a significant fact that when he later encountered Hickok he made no move to carry out his threat.

On Hickok's pistol work, I can agree with Mr. Stevens. I doubt if any man could have out-shot him at hitting a target. In addition, he was extremely fast on the draw. Wyatt Earp admitted Hickok's speed, but placed more stress on his accuracy.

To go on and on pulling this article to pieces would take a dozen pages. I'll content myself with asking if you will kindly make my comments known to Mr. Stevens, in the hope that we may correspond on the subject. I have taken a very serious view of the Hickok story, and all comments—whether good or bad—are carefully scrutinized for possible authentic facts.—Joseph G. Rosa, 17 Woodville Gardens, Ruislip, Middlesex, England.

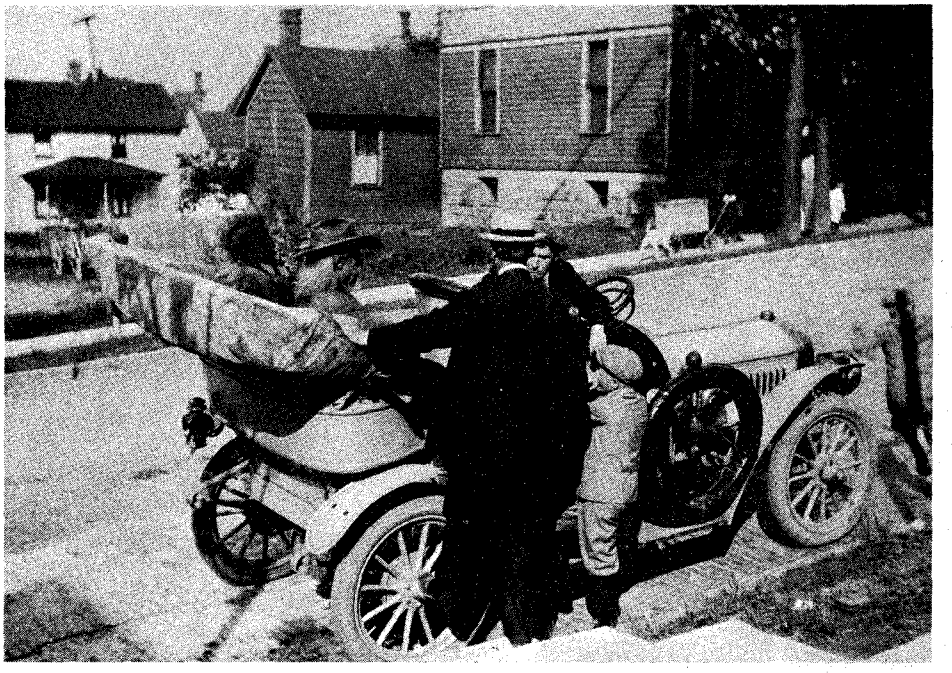
The Story as Told by Monroe McCanles to M. I. McCreight

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I am enclosing a short article based on my knowledge of the Hickok-McCanles affair. It was my exposure of the facts, as related by Monroe McCanles, that resulted in the citizens of Nebraska spending time and money to verify the truth.

First a word as to my own background: My own experience in the Old West began in 1885, in what is now known as North Dakota. I was the buffalo bone buyer and shipper from that region, covering a large part of the total bone traffic which lasted some 20 years and totaled more than $50,000,000 in value. I was the Indian dealer and had many friends among the tribesmen. I was also the treasurer for the J. J. Hill Fat Stock Show at Devil's Lake, and spaded up the first shovelful of earth to lay the first ties in the building of the Great Northern Railroad.

In later years, the Sioux made me a chief with Colonel William Cody (Buffalo Bill) witnessing the ceremony. On return from the frontier, my life has been spent as managing head of the largest bank in this section—a business career lasting 57 years. Now, at 90 odd, I live in the Wigwam here at Dubois, Pennsylvania, where I have the most valuable collection of Indian items in all America—or so, the experts tell me.



Buffalo Bill, with Chief Iron Tail at his left, in M. I. McCreight's Rambler auto in 1908. The man standing is Monroe McCanles, son of Dave McCanles, killed by Hickok at Rock Creek Station in 1861.

If you care to use this little write-up on the Hickok-McCanles affair, it will be from me as a contribution to the truth of Western history.—M. I. McCreight, The Wigwam, Box 2, Sandy Turnpike, Dubois, Pennsylvania.

So much has been written about Wild Bill Hickok that one hesitates to add to the pile. Hickok was shot before I got into the old frontier, but I knew well Monroe McCanles who, at 12, saw his father shot by Hickok from behind a blanket or curtain which divided the main room of the cabin.

Hid behind the curtain, Hickok was not even known to be in the cabin when McCanles stopped in the doorway with the boy beside him. Hickok took down from the wall the rifle belonging to McCanles which he had left for the use of the Wellmans.

As McCanles called to Wellman to come to the door, Hickok fired through the blanket, killing McCanles. Hickok then yelled to Wellman to help him kill the other two men who stood outside in the roadway. McCanles and the others had come merely to get some satisfaction from Wellman on the long-past-due rental. All were unarmed and had no thought of trouble. Only a coward would be guilty of such a hideous murder as this. Young McCanles was chased by Hickok from his father's body, out into the Rock Creek stream bed. Here the terrified boy succeeded in outrunning Hickok on his breathless run to his home, to tell his mother what had happened.

For more than fifty years, printed stories have pictured Hickok to the public as a great hero. To puncture this myth, the writer induced Monroe McCanles—then living in Kansas City—to relate the facts. I took down his statement in exact detail. This data was reduced to an article printed in *Forest and Stream Magazine,* which drew a lot of comment across the country. It aroused the citizens of Nebraska to conduct a thorough investigation of the infamous affair. The April-June, 1927, issue of *The Nebraska History Magazine* was completely devoted to publishing the results of this investigation, clearing up this "much mis-represented event in Nebraska history."

The TRUTH of it all was just as told to me by Monroe McCanles. Monroe, when grown to manhood, married Martha McCreight, daughter of my own uncle, Joseph McCreight. In later years, the couple lived in Kansas City where they raised a fine family. In 1908, Monroe McCanles and his family came to

(Continued on following page)

Dave McCanles, Hickok's victim in the Rock Creek Station shooting. Frontier Pix

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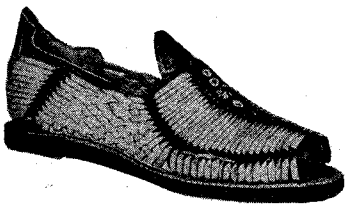

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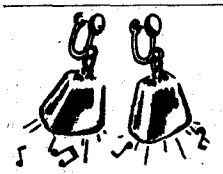

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Hickok—Hero or Heel?

(Continued from preceding page)

visit the writer at his home in Pennsylvania. It happened that Buffalo Bill was in town with his Wild West Show, and Colonel Cody was invited to my home for dinner and to meet McCanles. Here the truth about the Hickok-McCanles affair was first heard by Colonel Cody. He was deeply interested, and said that he would include the true story of the killing in the new book he was then preparing for publication. Incidentally, another guest at that long-ago dinner was Chief Iron Tail, of whom Colonel Cody stated to the writer: "Iron Tail is the finest man I know, bar none."

It was my good fortune to know many people in the United States and in Europe, but I knew none for whom I had higher regard than for Monroe McCanles. Modest and unassuming, McCanles tried to avoid notoriety in getting the truth about the lurid Hickok tales which had become so fixed in Western history. Monroe once remarked wearily to me that the utterly false version of his father's death had become so entrenched in Western lore that the truth could never be established. But—thanks

Recent photo of Mr. and Mrs. M. I. McCreight.

to the quiet perseverance of Monroe McCanles—the truth has been entered in the final records from which real history is made.

The truth is this: Wild Bill Hickok was a gambler and a truly worthless character. His notoriety as a great gun-fighter is derived from the false tale of his "Battle with the McCanles Gang," comprising ten men—all of whom he claimed to have stood off in a "Superman Slaughter." Instead, he shot one man from behind a curtain.

Another Version of the Wild Bill-McCanles Fight

In reply to Ray W. Stevens Jr., in his story, "Hickok, the Hero," I would like to throw a little more light on the part dealing with the Wild Bill-McCanles killing; also, some of the incidents leading up to the death of Wild Bill Hickok.

I realize how hard it is to get the facts on something which happened so long ago. No doubt Mr. Stevens found in his research the very things he has written. I have been reading stories by authors, whose source of information was Monroe McCanles, son of D. C. McCanles, for over forty years. Monroe was the twelve-year-old boy who was present when his father was killed. Why not hear the other side of the story, and tell some of the background of D. C. McCanles?

David Colbert McCanles was the one killed. His brother James Leroy, who had been in partnership with him, had sold out to his brother and moved to Crab Orchard, Nebraska, later moving to Colorado and becoming a wealthy and prominent man. The family came to Nebraska from the mountains of North Carolina, where D. C. McCanles was born in Watagua County in 1828. They were of Scotch-Irish descent. Before leaving Carolina, David Colbert was elected sheriff and held the office several terms or until he left on his trip west. Several years before McCanles left Carolina he married a girl by the name of Mary Green. At the time of their move to Nebraska they had four children, Monroe, Julius, Clingman and Elizabeth.

The first of the McCanles party arrived at Rock Creek Station in April 1859. His wife and children came in September, 1859. McCanles first bought the west Rock Creek Ranch, located on the Oregon Trail, from Newton Glen and a ranch known as Little Sandy, but soon discovered they had little water at the West Side Station. He then built another station across and on the east side of Rock Creek, erecting barns and corrals. This was known as the Elkhorn Station and later was the scene of the Wild Bill-McCanles tragedy.

Soon after the East Side Station was finished McCanles built a toll bridge across Rock Creek between the two stations, using the west side for freighters and emigrants and the east side for the Overland Mail Stage and Pony Express. Charges for crossing were from ten cents to one dollar and fifty cents. The toll bridge was really making money for those days.

McCanles only lived about two years in Nebraska, but became widely known up and down the trail. He was quite a leader of men and had their respect, but mostly through fear. Being a moody type man he carried his jokes or his anger to the highest degree, having his own ideas of fun or meting out justice for something done unsuitable to him and many were handled rather roughly. He was the judge and the jury.

In the first party to arrive at Rock Creek Station with McCanles was a girl by the name of Kate Schell, who had been on too friendly terms with McCanles back in Carolina. She continued to be his mistress at the West Side Station. Although Mrs. McCanles protested violently, McCanles forced the women to be friendly in public. At least that is what the old-timers had to say about it.

Several of the early settlers there told me McCanles was organizing a gang of men for the purpose of preying upon the travelers of the trail, much like Quantrill and others along the border, as the Oregon Trail was really humming with travelers of all sorts. Just how many men McCanles had in his organization is not known or what their intention was, as he was killed

(Continued on page 32)

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Truly Western

Attention, Author Osborn!

Dear Editor:

I have read with interest "Gun With a Story to Tell' by Shy Osborn, in the February issue. While it is not my intention to start an argument with Mr. Osborn, there are a few facts in regard to Arkansas Tom that should be corrected just for the record. Mr. Osborn has this to say, and I quote:

"Arkansas Tom" Jones, another member of the outlaw band, was captured as he lay sick in his room at the hotel. Tom was the only member of the Doolin gang, save one, to be captured alive. Tom served 17 years, 4 months and 22 days of a 50-year sentence, and was a changed man when released from prison. He lived straight as a die the rest of his life, even serving as a *deputy* to Marshal Ed Nix who had captured him."

Ed Nix resigned as U.S. Marshal in 1896, some 14 years before Arkansas Tom was to be released on parole. From that date he was engaged in private business and never again connected with law enforcement. And here's what happened during the latter years of Arkansas Tom's life.

He was released on parole November 26, 1910, from the old Federal jail at McAlester, which Oklahoma had rented for a state prison. He then went to Oklahoma City to see Bill Tilghman, who, out of sympathy, secured a job for him with a grocery firm in eastern Oklahoma. Later he was employed by Ed Nix as a *clerk* in a wholesale mercantile firm in St. Louis. In 1914, he played his own part in a motion picture entitled "The Passing of the Oklahoma Outlaws," which was produced by Bill Tilghman, Ed Nix, and Chris Madsen. In 1916, Tom returned to Missouri and became involved in a bank burglary at Neosho. He was subsequently arrested, convicted, and sentenced in 1917 to the state penitentiary, Jefferson City, for a term of 8 years. He was released in November, 1921. Some three years later he held up a bank in Asbury, Missouri, and was killed in August, 1924, by Joplin police officers while resisting arrest.

And so, Arkansas Tom died as he had lived—with guns in hand and defying the law to the last.

Mr. Osborn and I have two things in common: we both like to write, and we both like to collect guns. I am sure it would be a real pleasure to know him personally. I can well appreciate the closing remarks of his article.—E. W. McIntosh, Overbrook, Oklahoma.

Attention, Writers!

Dear Sir:

How about printing the true life story of Tom Mix? A lot of people think that Tom was just a Hollywood cowboy, but that is far from the truth. Tom Mix was a genuine cowboy right off the range, but he was much more than that. He was a U.S. Marshal, a Rough Rider in the Spanish-American War, and a soldier of fortune who fought in China in the Boxer Uprising. Man, the life story of Tom Mix would make a natural for TRUE WEST!—Danny Webber, 507 East Broadway, Kingfisher, Oklahoma.

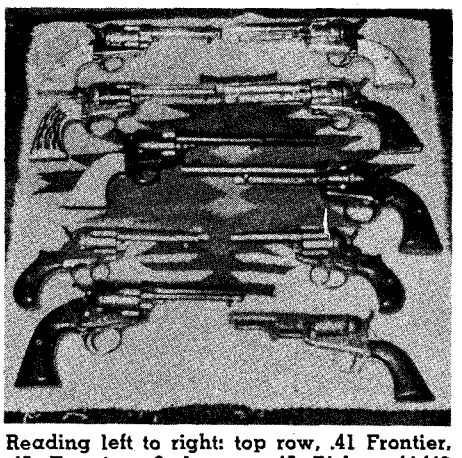
Wants More Gun Articles

Dear Fred:

Enclosed you will find a check for $3.00 for my subscription renewal to TRUE WEST:

Along with my sub renewal I had planned to include a suggestion for your consideration and maybe improvement of TRUE WEST, but today my February issue of the magazine arrived, and, much to my surprise, somebody else has the same idea as myself: stories and pictures of revolvers of outlaws and lawmen. The stories and pictures of the Dalton and Doolin six-shooters are very good. I am sure most "gun-bugs" and collectors, like myself, will heartily agree that such articles are a very welcome addition to your magazine.

I am enclosing a photo of twelve old Colt revolvers in my collection. Many times I have wondered what thrilling stories these Frontiers, Bisleys, Lightnings and Dragoons could tell—whom they belonged to, and where they have been.



Reading left to right: top row, .41 Frontier, .45 Frontier; 2nd row, .45 Bisley, 44/40 Frontier; 3rd row, .45 Peacemaker, .45 Bisley; 4th row, .38 Lightning, .38 Lightning, storekeeper model; 5th row, 32/20 Bisley, .31 Dragoon.

Most of the revolvers in my Colt collection are there through the efforts of my father, Mr. Charles Donoho, Dixon, Illinois, who is also a subscriber to TRUE WEST.

I sincerely hope that from time to time in the future you will print more such articles in TRUE WEST, as we gun-bugs really eat them up. Yours for a bigger and better year for TRUE WEST in 1956.—Ronald L. Donoho, 5304 Easy Place, Las Vegas, Nevada.

From the ARIZONA DAILY STAR January 18, 1956

PHOENIX, Jan. 17, (AP)

Another mystery involving a missing man and the sinister Superstition Mountains was reported by the sheriff's office here today.

The man is Martin C. Zywotko, also known as Gregory Mannering, a 38-year-old mechanic's helper from New York.

The mystery involves the discovery of some prospecting equipment, and other articles that apparently belonged to him, in the foothills of the Superstitions. The mountains long have attracted prospectors because of stories about the famed Lost Dutchman gold mine.

Sheriff Cal C. Boies today received a letter from Zywotko's brother, Alex, in Brooklyn. The letter said Zywotko left home last July for a vacation in Washington, D. C.; then wrote a few weeks later that he had gone to Phoenix for his health and expected to find work at a packing plant. He hasn't been heard from since, the brother said.

Boies said two Mesa men, Kenneth Pearce and F. T. Palmer, stumbled across a bedroll and a prospecting outfit in the foothills of the Superstitions on New Year's Day, while on a picnic with their families. The two men also found clothing, toilet articles, a canteen, a bottle of water, a first-aid kit, a flashlight, some cartridges, and two billfolds. In one of the billfolds were the names Zywotko and Mannering.

Chief Investigator Ralph Edmundson checked Phoenix area packing plants and the butchers' union without getting any information about Zywotko.

The sheriff got the letter from Zywotko's brother after Edmundson wrote to an address found in the billfold. The brother said Zywotko assumed the name Mannering for unexplained personal reasons.

The question now, Boies said, is whether Zywotko was drawn to the Superstitions like many other amateur prospectors in search of the lost mine, and whether he had perished in the rugged wilderness like others before him.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Can anybody give us further information on the above mystery? We'd sure like to know just what happened to this man.

Claims He's Located the Dutchman's Lost Mine

To the Editor of TRUE WEST:

Please forward the issue containing the story of the Dutchman's Lost Mine. I have located this mine, but—being at present hospitalized at the Imperial Valley Tuberculosis Sanitarium, Holtville, California—I can do nothing to get it into operation. When I have regained my health, I will open the mine to the general public.—Chris K. Gustell, c/o Imperial Valley T. B. San., Ward 5, Holtville, California.

Sermon on the Evils of Gold and Treasure

Gentlemen:

I have just read "Mystery of the Dutchman's Lost Mine—What Our Readers Think," in the November-December issue of TRUE WEST. I am about to write something that these readers will not like. Neither will writers like what I have to say. And I will add right here and now that I personally do not give a damn whether they like it or not, because it is absolute truth. Now to proceed:

The writers of those letters to TRUE WEST run true to form, inasmuch as all are victims of the age-old curse that has

(Continued on page 40)

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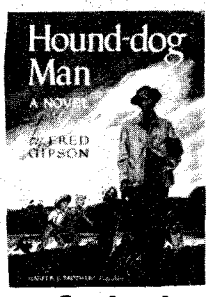
Fred Gipson

Reading him is like taking dope—once you start—you can't stop!



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Apache Siege at Alma

(Continued from page 10)

"What do you think of it?" she whispered to her husband.

"Nothing moving out there," he answered. "Maybe they've took out."

Despite the settlers' knowledge that Apaches usually left the hours of darkness to the spirits of the dead, fear returned in the black night. The men on the firing step probed the still dark with sleepless eyes, listening intently. They heard only the snuffling of the horses in the corral, and the wind blowing in the cottonwoods. A drowsing child awoke with a shrill cry of terror, and a woman comforted it. The smoke haze lifted with the night wind, and blew off toward the river. Off in the gloom, a burning cabin threw a dim red glow into the sky. Tensely, the settlers waited for dawn.

Toward dawn, something stirred in the darkness outside. Footsteps crunched the sand and drew closer in the night, coming right up to the cabin door. Somebody—or something—grunted outside, and the muffled sound was like a physical blow to the besieged. Then there was only silence.

Again, footsteps were heard—scuffling in the loose dirt of the corral. Horses whinnied in alarm, racing from one side of the enclosure to the other. Suddenly, a curious dragging sound fell upon the listeners' ears. The sound faded slowly in the direction of the river. Once more there was silence.

The night passed with no further alarms.

ABOVE the rugged hill to the east, dawn reddened the sky, silhouetting the crags and boulders on the ridge. Morning broke fully, and still there was no new attack. Atop the parapet, the tired men knelt stiffly. Some prayed. Below them, Mrs. Meador and the other women laid out the hatchets, knives and rusty sabers for a last stand when the ammunition was gone.

Through bloodshot eyes, the defenders saw that the bodies of the slain Indians were gone. The riddled corpses of the braves who had tried to storm the cabin had disappeared with the others. A trail of dried blood marked where they had been dragged off during the night.

There was no sign of Apaches anywhere. Victorio and his band had vanished with the night. The veteran chieftain had called off his pack of screeching braves. Further south they surged, venting their fury over the deadly Alma repulse on helpless farmers and sheepherders in the mountain country.

Flaming with their defeat at Alma, Victorio's braves killed, burned and pillaged throughout the San Francisco Valley.

Within the week, a rescue column of Silver City cavalrymen and civilian volunteers commanded by Captain Louis Madden, entered the valley. Near Pleasanton they found the mutilated bodies of Cooney and Chick.

Through the ravaged length of the valley, Madden's relief column discovered the bodies of 600 men, women, children, Mexican sheepherders, and soldiers—a bloody trail of death unparalleled in the history of Western Indian warfare.

Madden's scouts discovered campfire ashes at various points along the valley, but saw no other traces of Victorio's war party. Victorio and his warriors—destined later to meet defeat and death in Mexico—made good their escape after the Alma raid, despite the frantic, inept efforts of General Hatch and his cavalry brigade, recently sent into New Mexico Territory with orders to capture Victorio, dead or alive.

Captain Madden ordered couriers to contact the General, who had camped in comfortable bivouac less than twenty miles from the Alma fort during the entire twenty hours of the siege.

The couriers returned with a petulant message from Hatch: "Tell those volunteers and soldiers they have no business to go up there to Alma. Those volunteers had better stay at Silver City and mind their own business."

The powder-stained settlers at the "fort" spat disgustedly when Madden's couriers brought the General's message. "He's a soldier?" someone asked in derision.

John Meador, who had never made a speech in his forty years, lifted his eyes from the cartridge belt he was filling, and said dryly to Madden's courier: "Son, you ride right back to General Hatch. Tell him if he needs protection to move a little closer to the fort. We can give it to him."

Maybe they could have, at that.

The Rifle that Opened the West

(Continued from page 15)

cheek-piece. Patch-boxes were seldom used. Double-set triggers were integral with the trigger-guard. Early Hawkens were made with a full stock; later, the half-stock was adopted. Locks varied; some being of the ordinary "warranted" type, others handmade in the Hawken shop. R. Ashmore, an English maker, supplied locks for Hawken rifles, and a few have turned up equipped with locks stamped with the name "Meyer." A low silver blade set in a copper base was the standard front sight; a low buckhorn slanted slightly backward was the rear sight. Silver bead front sights were also available on special order.

In range and accuracy, the Hawken was outstanding in its day and surprisingly good even when judged by modern shooting standards. Bill Hamilton, in his book, *My Sixty Years on the Plains,* stated that "Hawkins" were the best rifles on the frontier in the early 1840's and credits them with a range of 350 yards. Horace Kephart, noted historian and rifleman, bought a Hawken in 1896 that had remained in storage many years and had never been fired, except when tested by one of the makers. The rifle was unstamped, but Kephart took it to Charley Siever, an old Hawken workman, for inspection and verification. Siever positively identified the rifle as a genuine Hawken, one that he had personally worked on more than forty years before. The venerable German gunsmith recognized the lock as one of his own manufacture.

KEPHART'S Hawken was a .53 caliber, half-stock, equipped with a $\frac{3}{16}$-inch silver bead front sight and buckhorn rear sight. The gun weighed 10½ pounds, with a lightweight stock and a very heavy 34-inch octagon barrel.

In *Shooting and Fishing* Magazine, October 1, 1896, Kephart published an account of his try-out of this Hawken. The test was conducted at 200 yards

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range, using the half-ounce (217 grain) ball, greased linen patch and charges of 41, 82, 123, 164, and 205 grains of FFFg Deadshot Powder. Kephart stated: "With 41 grains of powder there was no perceptible recoil; with 82 grains it was about the same as that of a 32-40 of like weight; with 123 grains it seemed about as heavy as that of a 38-55-330; with the 164 and 205 grains I experienced less shaking up than with a Springfield 45-70-500 fired in the same position. My arm was neither lamed nor discolored. The results satisfied me that a muzzle-loading rifle of 10½ pounds can be fired with a half-ounce round bullet and all the powder that accuracy will permit, without any recoil that a hunter or soldier would notice. This test gave me the impression that on a calm day I could keep in a 12-inch bull, which is all that I would guarantee to do with any gun fitted with such sights."

Kephart shot the Hawken in the off-hand hip rest position in this test and obtained best accuracy with 82 grains of powder.

The customary powder charge was half the weight of the ball. With this load the Hawken shot practically "flat" up to 150 yards, and with the heavier loads shot nearly level sighted at 200 to 250 yards.

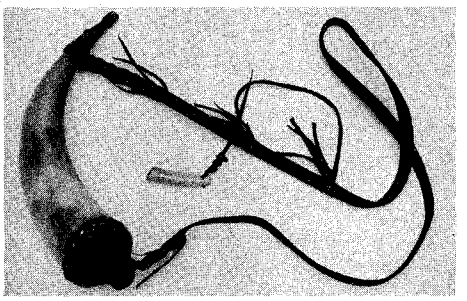
Weighing a solid 10 to 13 pounds, the Hawken was made in several calibers—from .44 to .53. Larger caliber rifles were made for special customers—the largest on record being the .66 to .68 caliber Sam Hawken made for General William Ashley. The barrel of this king-sized piece was 3 feet 6 inches long and carried an ounce ball. Using this rifle on a summer buffalo hunt in 1824, Ashley killed a huge bull with one shot at 280 yards.

The Hawken was a prime favorite with the mountain men. The half-ounce ball, propelled by a "b'ar load" of 200 grains of high-grade English Diamond Grain powder, was lethal against buffalo, elk, and bad Injuns. Even the mighty grizzly—respectfully tagged "Old Ephraim" by the trappers—could be stopped by the Hawken. Not by a heart shot—grizzlies "plugged dead center" through the heart had been known to reach and kill the hunter before they died. To drop a half-ton of red-eyed, charging bear in his tracks, the hunter had to score a brain shot through the grizzly's eye or through the roof of his yawning mouth. That brand of life-or-death marksmanship took guts as well as skill—the icy nerve to wait out the great bear's awesome rush and the ability to place that single half-ounce ball in exactly the right spot at precisely the right split-second. Timing told the story when facing Old Ephraim; the hunter who fired too soon or too late paid for his irrevocable mistake with his life.

Hunting buffalo was utterly different and far less dangerous. Picking his quarry out of a herd of the ponderous, shaggy beasts, the hunter rode his trained buffalo horse up on his chosen victim from behind and on the left side and blasted away at point-blank range. The vital target area lay well back on the buffalo's flank rather than directly behind the left shoulder. Aimed behind the last rib, the hunter's ball smashed down and forward through the intestines toward the heart. A buffalo's heart hung low in his huge body, and thus could easily be missed by a man shooting from a running horse. By making the quartering gut shot at close range, the experienced hunter fatally wounded his buffalo even though he missed the heart entirely.

SMOOTH-BORE guns were preferred by hunters running buffalo, since this type of weapon was easier to load on the back of a racing horse than a rifle. Some hunters became so expert at this that loading and firing ten times in a mile run was a commonplace occurrence. Heavy horse pistols were often substituted for long guns in these buffalo chases.

Rifles, especially the powerful Hawken and the fine sporting rifles made by famed English gunmakers, Richards and Manton, were best for stalking buffalo on foot. Francis Parkman in *The Oregon Trail* wrote: "The method of 'approaching,' being practiced on foot, has many advantages over that of 'running'; in the former, one neither breaks down his horse nor endangers his own life; he must be cool, collected and watchful; must understand the buffalo, observe the features of the country, the course of the wind and be well skilled in using the rifle. The buffalo are strange animals; sometimes they are so stupid and infatuated that a man may walk up to them in full sight on the open prairie and even shoot several of their number



Typical powder horn carried by the mountain men.

before the rest will think it necessary to retreat. At another moment they will be so shy and wary that in order to approach them the utmost skill, experience, and judgment are necessary . . ."

Along with Bill Williams, Mariano Modena and Kit Carson, Jim Bridger packed a Hawken throughout most of his fifty years on the Plains. Bridger took "Ol' Bull Thrower" into retirement with him in 1871 and hung the battered rifle above the fireplace of his Missouri cabin. The old gun, many times rebored until it was nearer .60 caliber than its original .53, sported a double row of brass-headed tacks studding its cracked, worn stock; mute yet eloquent testimony to the number of Indian and grizzly *coups* it had scored.

"A man's rifle!" declared Jim proudly to awed neighbors come to call on the famous scout and mountain man. "Nigh onto fifty year I packed a Hawken on the Plains, all the way from the Great Salt Lake to the Mackenzie River. This yere Ol' Bull Thrower is the last of the lot—and the one that lasted me longest. I could shoot her all day without cleanin' and my last shot went jest ez true ez my first—er anyhow, my second. When I threw down with her on a pizen-mad grizzly er a skulkin' Blackfoot, she made 'em *come* every time! Yes sir, gentlemen, this yere weepon is a *man's* rifle all the way!"

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Hickok—Hero or Heel?

(Continued from page 28)

before their real purpose was carried out; but, the fact is they were known as the McCanles gang.

Not long before the McCanles-Wild Bill affair, McCanles had disposed of the Little Sandy Ranch and sold the West Side Station to Hagenstein & Wolf. Next he sold the East Side Station to the Overland Stage and Mail Company. At this time Wild Bill was living in a dugout on the bank of Rock Creek between the two stations, having been hired by the Overland Stage Company as horse wrangler for their station on the Oregon Trail. Wild Bill was offered this employment while recovering from an encounter with a bear he shot and wounded and had to finish with his knife. Hickok was badly wounded and was helpless for several months.

Now for the story published in *Harper's Magazine,* written by Emerson Hough in February, 1867. It is believed the Wild Bill-McCanles tragedy was on July 12, 1861. This was just another tall story, as the writers of that day became popular by telling the impossible. For several years now, a good many have joined the de-bunkers; very few today are afraid of the early day gunmen, since most of them are in their grave.

Mr. Stevens, in his story, tells of McCanles wrestling Wild Bill and calling him "Duck Bill." This is another story told by Monroe McCanles. How could Wild Bill wrestle anyone after being laid up by a bear? As for calling him "Duck Bill," I never talked to anyone who knew Wild Bill who would believe it.

Monroe McCanles has been writing and telling his side of the story for at least forty-four years. William Monroe McCanles died on May 17, 1934, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Maude Lyster, Lincoln, Kansas.

Just what happened when McCanles was killed will never be known. All we have is a few people who remember what the people living near there had to say, and a few court records. In 1912, when Monroe McCanles started telling his side of the story, I called on my old friend Capt. Lute North, of Columbus, Nebraska. Lute said, "Of course I wasn't there, but I remember the affair well. The truth is McCanles was a tough hombre, and he got tough with the wrong man. Wild Bill didn't shoot down innocent men." I then brought up the subject of Wild Bill's marksmanship. He said, "Wild Bill was a marvelous shot. My brother, Major North, beat Wild Bill in a shooting match in Deadwood, but Wild Bill was not only fast on the draw, he could shoot just as good when the other fellow was shooting at him as he could at a mark."

Capt. Lute North, as an authority and a man of his word, was well known in Nebraska and prominent in the Nebraska Historical Society, and knew personally nearly all of the early-day characters along the trail.

In Mr. Stevens' story he states Hickok, Wellman, and Brink were tried by Justice of the Peace, Pat Towle, at Beatrice, Nebraska, and acquitted on grounds of self-defense, saying Nebraska was a territory and many trials were shams. Rock Creek Station, where the killing took place, was located in what was then known as Jones County, having been created by the Legislature in 1856.

According to the records, Hickok, with several others, was arrested for manslaughter. After a short trial they were declared not guilty, following a plea of self-defense. (General index, District Court of Jones County, Nebraska, Transcript Book, page 4; Territory of Nebraska, plaintiff, William B. Hickok, J. W. Brink and Horace Wellman, defendants, July 18, 1861.)

David Butler, afterwards Governor of the State of Nebraska, was prosecuting attorney and Judge O. M. Mason, the presiding Judge.

A number of years ago one writer, giving McCanles as his source of information, tells of the men around the Stage Station slapping Hickok with their open hands, as he was only a weakling and they didn't want to hurt him. Another writer says Hickok was something of a dandy, and only a boy. Imagine this for a man with the physique and reputation of Wild Bill. He was about 24 years old at the time, and already known as Wild Bill.

The McCanles family continued to live in Jefferson County until the town of Endicott was built, later moving to various places where most of the family became prominent people. Mrs. McCanles died at the home of her son, Charles, in Colorado about 1904. Like a great many historic places, Rock Creek Station has its legend of gold. McCanles was supposed to have buried his gold in a large iron pot under the floor, where it was fast getting larger. It is said Mrs. McCanles told he moved the gold a few nights before they were to leave the station and he was only gone about an hour, and said he intended to tell her the exact location, but death sealed his lips before this could be done. Many have searched for this. Some claimed his brother knew where it was buried; others thought he planned to take the gold and meet Kate at some pre-arranged location. Only a few years ago an old well was filled up, removing the last remaining mark of the historic Stage Station.

Of course, everyone is familiar with most of the Hickok story. It has never been claimed that Wild Bill was an angel, but a necessary part of the lawless west. It took men like Hickok to quiet down the characters who, after a few drinks, would blow into town like a strong northwest wind and start abusing innocent citizens.

Gay Bump, formerly of Albion, Nebraska, a personal friend of mine and later a guide in the badlands of South Dakota, told of his father being in the saloon when Wild Bill was shot in the back of the head by Jack McCall. Bump was chosen as one of the jurymen. He said they met that night in a well-known, old log town hall that was used for such trials. All that night the jury argued, with a shooting drunken mob outside. All the jurymen except Bump agreed that the murderer had killed Hickok in self-defense. Finally, a Winchester rifle barrel was shoved through a crack between the logs and the jury was asked for the one who could not agree. The jury soon agreed after this turn of events.

McCall was returned later and hanged for the cowardly murder.

Funeral notice of Wild Bill Hickok was distributed among the miners saying the funeral would be held at Charlie

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Utter's Camp. He was buried in Ingleside Cemetery, Deadwood, South Dakota, then a romantic spot on the mountain side. Pallbearers were John Oyster, Jerry Lewis, William Hillman, Tom Dosier, Charlie Rich, and Charles Young. On a large stump at the head of the grave they carved the following inscription: "A brave Man, the victim of an assassin, J. B. Hickok, (Wild Bill) age 39 years. Murdered by Jack McCall, Aug. 2, 1876." Captain Jack Crawford, the Poet Scout, one of Wild Bill's close friends, wrote a poem commemorating his burial.

Here is the first stanza:

Under the sod in the Prairie land
We have laid him down to rest,
With many a tear from the sad, rough throng,
And the friends he loved the best.
And many a heartfelt sigh was heard
As over the sward we trod,
And many an eye was filled with tears
As we covered him with the sod.

Wild Bill's body was later moved to Mount Moriah Cemetery. Charlie Utter had a marble headstone erected and inscribed: "Wild Bill, J. B. Hickok, killed by the assassin Jack McCall, Deadwood, City, S. Dak. Black Hills, Aug. 2nd 1876. Pard, we will meet again in the Happy Hunting Grounds to part no more. Goodbye, Colorado Charlie." After this stone was chipped away a new one was erected and surrounded by a steel cage.

It is claimed by some writers that Wild Bill filled his hands with his revolvers after being shot. The truth is he slipped to the floor holding the cards in his hands. These cards later became known as Dead Man's hand. They were the Ace of Diamonds, Ace of Clubs, Eight of Spades, Eight of Hearts, and the Queen of Hearts. Cards at that time did not have the small corner emblems that are now used. It was said a man by the name of Richard Stevens picked up the cards and still had them a few years ago, out in Seattle. I tried for years to locate him, but never succeeded.

Will someone explain to me why Wild Bill and these other men would shoot down an innocent man when they were only working for their employer? As far as McCanles being unarmed, everything points to the fact he was always armed. I have yet to read an article showing Wild Bill in an unfavorable light in this fight unless the source leads back to Monroe McCanles, and I have been reading them for nearly fifty years. I could not keep still any longer.

Wild Bill certainly was no braggart, he let his guns do his talking for him and what they said was said with emphasis.—Elmer E. Sparks, Canadian, Texas.

Don't let him in—he looks crooked!

Madame Moustache

(Continued from page 13)

ped on a pair of pistols and walked to the dock. There she stood, fending off the craft, which, if landed, would have touched off an epidemic in the small camp. When the word got around, Madame Moustache's faro bank and gambling layout was always crowded. She played as carefully as ever, perhaps more grimly, but after a year or so she closed up and disappeared.

Apparently with eye to respectability and old age, she bought a large cattle ranch near Carson City, Nevada. Her investment was a good one; she was determined to be one gambler that didn't die broke. But animal husbandry wasn't an all-consuming interest, as she soon was seen in the company of self-styled "Colonel" Kai Carruthers. The fancy-booted, cattle-buying Carruthers soon soft-talked Madame Moustache into being his ever-loving bride, but it wasn't more than a few weeks after marriage before she realized that the honeymoon was over. The Colonel set about to whip her into line, and insisted she sign over her ranch, cows, and everything else. Meekly, perhaps thinking of the long, lonely, cruel years behind her, she gave him everything she owned. Just as promptly, the Colonel liquidated it all and scooted from Carson City.

Madame Moustache shrugged philosophically and disappeared from Carson City, too. Shortly thereafter she arrived in Aurora, Nevada, taking up again at the old stand. Word followed that her former husband, the Colonel, had been found dead from a pair of shotgun blasts.

Madame Moustache's only response was a nod, and a solitary drink.

AURORA'S wealth was only grass-roots deep and Madame Moustache wasn't far behind the horde that swarmed over Lucky Boy grade into "Shootin' Town, U.S.A.," or, as it's marked on the maps, Bodie, California.

Bodie Rose and Fancy Ann were there to greet her and help her lay out the rig. Once more, the Madame was victim of short-card lads, but even though she was certain she'd been cheated, she paid off to her last gold coin, then walked to the bar.

"Double shot," she called. One followed another, and Madame Moustache swayed slightly as she pushed apart the swinging doors. Broke, beauty faded, only a derisive name to be remembered by, she trudged slowly towards her cabin.

"Perhaps the woman's place is in the home," she smiled. "Men were my downfall. But I did fix the Colonel's wagon . . . two loads of my scattergun." Then she pushed the creaking door. "Oh, well, lucky at cards, unlucky in love."

It was the next morning, September 7, 1879, when a visitor found Madame Moustache dead, a bottle of poison beside her. Bodie was strangely quiet and respectful when they lowered her into the hillside cemetery overlooking the town.

An obituary appeared later which was as gentle a summation as anyone might make of a pioneer female card-sharper: "Let her many good qualities invoke leniency in criticising her failings."

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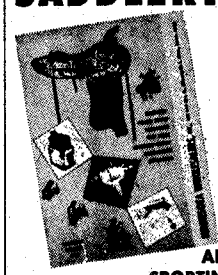

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The Great Baptizing

(Continued from page 11)

chuck wagon about a hundred yards away to extend our invitation "to all or any of you oldsters who have sinned and want to repent, come hither to be baptized and have your sins washed away—or at least, thirty or forty years of accumulated filth. Salvation is free today. Come and get it while you may!"

Those old codgers acted real bashful; they didn't seem to care a hoot whether their souls were saved or not. We asked 'em politely, starting off with old Tom.

"Now, Mr. Tom, what church do you belong to—if any? Do you believe in immersion for the washing away of sins? If not, *why* not? Just trot along with us to the creek, get baptized, and set a good example for the rest of these old sinners . . . You won't, hey?"

Tom wouldn't—and, furthermore, he threatened in coarse language to break the neck of the first blankety-blank button that laid a hand on him. Fighting words, and the old boy meant 'em too.

"Tut-tut, Mr. Tom, you ought to be grateful to us for worrying about your immortal soul . . . grab him, boys!"

One lone stiffened-up waddy can't fight a whole bunch of fool boys, so we lugged old Tom to the creek. With solemn ceremony, accompanied by appropriate vocal music, we soused him under. Tom came up, spouting the most vile, profane, and abusive language our shrinking ears had ever heard. Someone hollered, "Boys, it didn't take! He's still cussin'. Shove him under again, and hold him under till he blubbers."

Turned out that old Tom was a good scout after all. He saw the humor of the situation after his second baptizing, and spoke up real prompt before we could duck him again, "Boys, don't sock me under again. I believe I'm saved—it's took. I'm cleansed anyway, and if you wish, I'll help you baptize that whole bunch of sinners one at a time. Let's go round 'em up right now!"

The old fellers swore something scandalous when they saw us coming for 'em with converted Tom leading the way. They tried to scuttle off and hide in the high sacaton and salt grass, but they didn't get far before a couple of buttons picked them off and dragged them, squalling like trapped cougars, to the creek of salvation. It wasn't hard running 'em down. You know, an old cow-servant becomes bow-legged in the course of time (unless he has his legs broken and straightened out every few years) and he can't navigate with much speed across those high sacaton and salt grass bumps. Those high centers are hell on an old model's differential. He can't go far until he hangs up and can hardly wiggle loose.

Those old cowpokes fought and cussed and blowed like Gila monsters, and they were just about as helpless. 'Twas certainly a task to chase 'em down and tote 'em a couple hundred yards to the crystal font and immerse 'em. However, we buttons were just plum full of religious spirit, and nothing these old sinners could do discouraged us. We worked with a right good will, and soon the job was finished. When you're toiling in the vineyard to save sin-ridden souls, you've gotta be damn tough!

Outside of a few black eyes and torn clothing here and there, the Great Baptizing was a howling success.

That happened a mighty long time ago. Was any lasting good accomplished? *Quien sabe?* But it sure was lots of fun. Practically all the old-timers involved have passed on, and many of the buttons. I was a button in those days, and have now passed my Biblical span of three score and ten by another decade and then some.

Old Father Time moves relentlessly on, and one by one us old-timers fall by the wayside, but anyhow we old cow-servants have had our fun.

Uranium: 1956

(Continued from page 7)

There's a continual flow of rumors and reports in the boomtowns about uranium finds or good places to look for ore. Success stories like Steen's or Pick's naturally sweep the towns like wildfire, and step up the pace of prospecting. Prospectors and everyone else are generally glad to pass on whatever they hear, and a prospecting novice can pick up more valuable information just from chewing the fat with local merchants than he could get from all the books and brochures ever written on the subject of uranium hunting.

A man can stake a uranium claim on any land that's state-owned or in the public domain—that is, doesn't belong to anybody in particular—and hasn't been already staked out by another prospector. Practically none of the land on the Plateau is privately owned, for the simple reason that it's almost all desert. It's the kind of country you see on picture postcards from the Grand Canyon, which runs along the southern edge of the Plateau. Square, red mesas, flat as table tops against the sunset, vast sweeps of mesquite-covered sand stretching away to the treeless, eroded mountain ranges on the horizon.

The prospector pushed up into this country with one eye on the rock formations and the other on the indicator of his Geiger counter. He knows that uranium ore is usually found in one of three different rock strata laid down at various times in geologic history—known as the Morrison, the Chinle, and the Shinarump formations. This narrows his search a little—which is important, considering the territory there is to cover and the fact that he's got to be standing next to the uranium before he can know it's there.

THE Geiger counter is always registering a little—a slow click-clicking caused partly by cosmic rays from outer space and partly by the fact that all rock contains minute traces of radioactive material. This is called "background count," varying in different localities. A prospector doesn't get excited unless his counter starts showing at least three or four times the rate of the background count. This means he has a possibility, known as an "anomaly."

If he finds an anomaly, and not many prospectors get even this close, he circles the area a little, holding the probe of his counter next to the rocks in different spots to find where the radiation is strongest. He chops away a little rock here and there to match it with the ore samples he carries or to run a simple chemical test for uranium that most kids could handle with their Christmas chemistry sets. He may make a "grid survey," taking one-minute counter-readings at 20-foot intervals and re-

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cording them on a piece of paper marked off in grids representing 20-foot squares. This gives him a better idea of the approximate size, dimensions, and relative quality of the "hot" deposit, uranium or otherwise, that lies under his feet.

If it looks worthwhile, the prospector takes some compass readings to locate the spot by local landmarks, and then paces off a rectangle 600x1500 feet, centering on the hottest point of the anomaly. This is his claim; he marks it by putting up a line of rock cairns, and nails his claim notice to a post in the center. Then he goes back to the nearest county seat to register his claim at the county clerk's office.

By the simple act of putting up a wood post (in addition, let's say, to spending a year in the desert, squandering his savings, sweating off 20 pounds he couldn't afford to lose, stepping in a couple of rattlesnake nests, and falling off an occasional cliff) the prospector has become sole owner of uranium mining rights on a sizable piece of land. Not the land itself, just the rights. He's gotten much farther along the road to riches than most prospectors ever will. But his troubles are just beginning.

Finding uranium is actually the easier half of prospecting—it's digging it out that really comes hard. A man can't sell his uranium to the A.E.C. until he's gotten it out of the ground. He can't even be sure he's got anything *worth* getting out until he's hauled a compressed-air drill rig up to the site and dug up enough rock to show the lay of the land. All this is called "development work," and its cost is apt to run as high as $15,000 for even a small claim.

THERE are several dozen prospectors on the Plateau today with hardly a nickel in their jeans—and mining claims that may be worth millions of dollars. They can't get their ore out without money, and they can't raise money without getting their ore out. Some have even been forced to give up their claims and go back home to get jobs—the law requires a man to do a minimum amount of work on his claim each year to maintain ownership.

Banks or finance companies won't help a man out of this maddening situation, because even a likely-looking claim is a very long-shot bet to become a producing mine. A prospector may sell his trailer, or the clothes off his back, to get enough money to buy equipment to dig out a little ore to sell for more money to buy more equipment to dig out more ore, and so on—until he's either on Easy Street or Skid Row. Or he may try to raise capital by turning to a stock promoter; here, the claim-owner will set himself up as a "mining company" and issue shares of stock, which the promoter hustles for him. If the claim turns out to be a bonanza, the lion's share is most likely to go to the promoter and the shareholders—but few prospectors will quibble about a few million bucks when they have nothing to start with.

Some sixty new companies have been formed in Utah alone in recent months. Their stock sells "pre-issue" for a few cents a share, (most drop below issue value, or out of sight, within a few days) and the trading is strictly over-the-counter rather than on a regular stock exchange. In Salt Lake City, this includes lunch counters. One small men's restaurant, the Grabeteria, went so far as to remove all the girlie pictures in the back room and set up a dignified-looking brokerage office.

Speculating in uranium stocks on the Colorado Plateau is almost as much of a gamble as prospecting there. It's not, of course, anywhere near as strenuous, or adventurous.

For the real gamblers and the real adventurers, there's an even more irresistible long shot, and it's not on the Colorado Plateau at all.

Neither is it within strolling distance of Wyoming's fancy dude ranches or such plushy resorts as Idaho's Sun Valley, where drugstore cowboys carry Geiger counters more as walking sticks than as instruments of business. They're having their fun and getting no more than fresh air. There are actually quite a few claims near Hailey, twelve miles north of Sun Valley, but nobody has done any mining. The big payoff lies in more rugged territory.

Several hundred miles to the northwest, beyond the roaring cataracts of the Snake River, are the mountain and forest fastnesses of the Inland Empire. This is the country of the jagged Sawtooth Range, of deep-blue, hidden lakes, and the stream called the River of No Return—stretching from northern Idaho into eastern Oregon, it includes hundreds of square miles of the last truly unexplored territory in the continental United States. Seen from the air, this wilderness is a continuous sweep of mountain ranges—ranges studded and serrated with rock outcrops, the congealed deposits of molten lava from the interior of the earth.

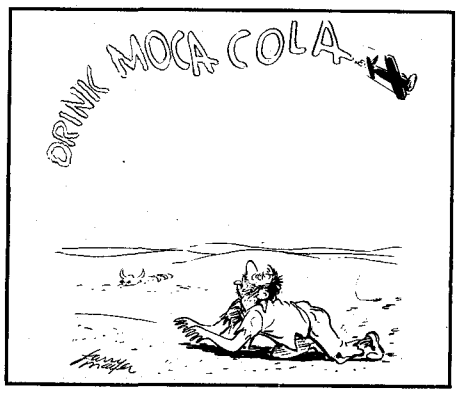
The uranium potential of this land is enormous. Here, many believe, may lie the mother lode—or the great-grandmother lode of all the uranium spread over the western slope of the Rockies.

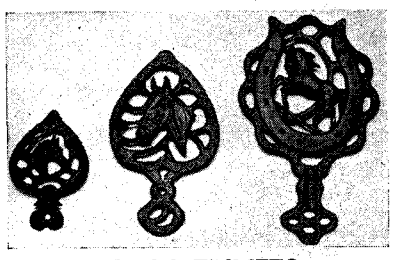
Yet not a rock has been chipped in search of it. No one has probed the treasures of this wilderness with a Geiger counter. No one has even been there.

It seems inevitable that someone will come before long, just as more will come to the Colorado Plateau, where there's still more than enough uranium to go around. If only one American male in every thousand is healthy enough, bold enough, and maybe crazy enough, to give up his job, mortgage his family's security, and even risk his life for the sake of one great adventure and the chance to be a billionaire, it's conceivable that there may be 50,000 prospectors roaming the western slopes within the next few years.

For each, it will be a reckless gamble. Nearly all, no matter what they risk, will fail completely. But any one of them might be the man who finds the mother lode.

Uranium [illegible] find it. And the finder's fee is tremendous.





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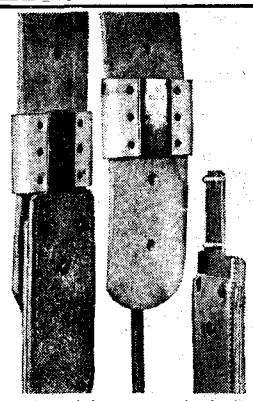

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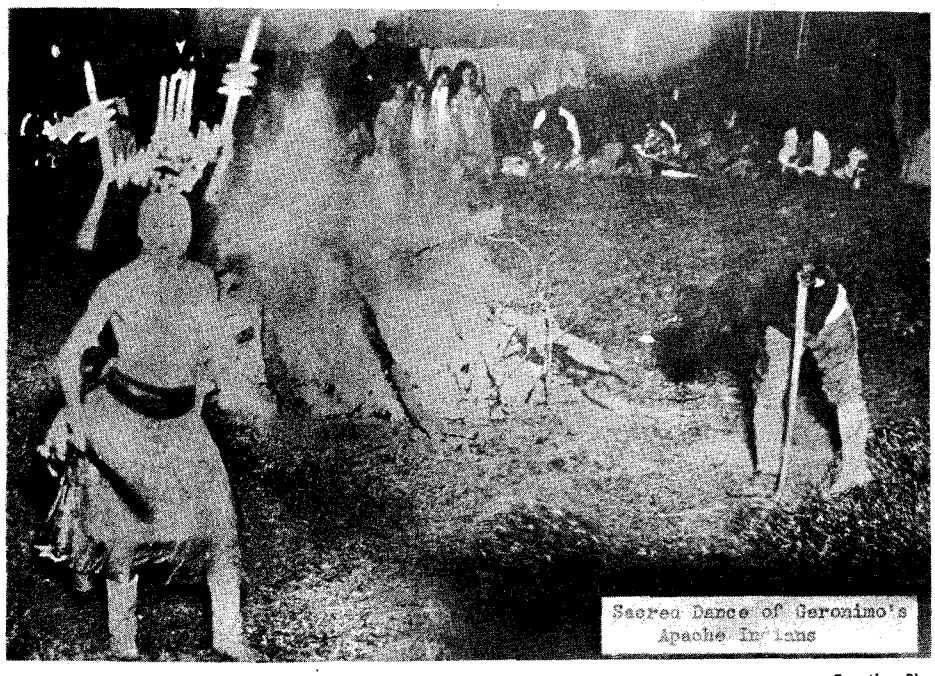

Frontier Pix

Apaches maintain their ancient rites and customs to the present day. Here Geronimo's braves present a sacred dance still performed by modern Apaches.

Know the Truth about Indians

(Continued from page 21)

more picturesque history or stronger characteristic background than the American Indians. As with all peoples, various tribes had different habits and customs. Some were nomad tribes, wandering from place to place, following the great buffalo herds from north to south and back again. Others were agriculturists. Pumpkins, potatoes, corn, squash, and tobacco are the products that the Indians contributed to the agricultural world.

The American Indian had distinctive traits, high ideals. For example, profanity was unknown to the native Indian tongue. Stealing within the tribes was an extreme rarity, punishable by expulsion. Perhaps the greatest of all Indian virtues was the obedience and respect shown by Indian youth to their elders. Conversely, Indian children were respected as individuals by their elders and treated as such. An Indian child was never struck by his parents; the Indian regarded with horror the white father who whipped his child.

It is the false picture of the American Indian implanted in the minds of children that concerns me most deeply. Historians tell nothing of the white man's savagery, once he obtained absolute power over the Indian. Churchmen do not tell of the incredible brutality of the pious and sanctimonious Pilgrim Fathers against the Pequot tribe. A Pilgrim preacher rose in his pulpit on Sunday morning to "thank God the militia have sent six hundred heathen souls to hell!" Nor is it considered good form to mention that Christian Indians were hunted down and killed like wolves in Pennsylvania and Ohio—even shot down in church, as they knelt to ask God's blessing on their persecutors.

The colonies of Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Jersey, and New York offered bounties for Indian scalps. The Pennsylvania official procedure was as follows: "For every Indian male above ten years captured, $150; for every male above ten years killed and scalped, $134; for every male or female under ten years captured, $130; for every female above ten years killed and scalped, $50."

HISTORIANS tell the white youth that Indians killed defenseless women and scalped their enemies; yet no mention is made of white men plundering, murdering, raping, and torturing Indians. Nor are all these atrocities of ancient date. The massacre of Wounded Knee is not forgotten, and the memory of many raids and unprovoked attacks lingers vividly in the minds of living Indians.

To sum up: The truth has been so long suppressed that it is not generally known that first relations between red man and white were almost invariably friendly. Indians taught the first colonists to raise potatoes, corn, squash, pumpkins, melons, beans, and tobacco. In their first bitter winter, the Virginia colonists were fed by Indians. Captain John Smith, the military leader of the colonists, repaid their kindness by marching upon their village with his soldiers and forcing them to give up food they needed desperately for themselves. Later, the Indians attacked the Virginia colonists in a vain attempt to prevent them from establishing huge plantations on their hunting grounds.

Indians also helped the Pilgrims to survive during *their* first hard winter. How were they repaid? Not with friendly gratitude, you may be sure! For example, Squanto, with four companions, was lured aboard a ship and carried off to England. Upon his return, he proved himself a true friend to the Pilgrims and tried hard to bring about peaceful relations between them and the neighboring tribes. He bore no grudge against them.

King Philip sought patiently to remain at peace with the Pilgrims, and it was only after repeated outrages that he took up arms against them. In the war

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that followed, King Philip's tribe was utterly exterminated, and his wife and child sold as slaves in the Bermuda Islands. The chief himself was killed, drawn, and quartered. His head was severed from his body and carried about on a pike by the exulting soldiers.

Few whites are aware of the fact that until 1637 scalping was unknown among the New England Indians. The Puritans began the barbarous practice by offering cash for the heads of Indians, and later accepting scalps if both ears were attached. The French were the first to offer bounties for the scalps of white people, with the English quickly following suit. Such large sums of money were expended by the scalp-buyers that scores of white men took up the lucrative business of hunting scalps.

So you see, the Indian was first of all a hunter, not a warrior, as the history books state. He was a hunter from stark necessity, for upon his skill in hunting game depended his living. His early training and boyhood games were all designed to teach him skill in hunting. He was also instructed in arts, songs, story-telling, and oratory. Nowhere can you find an instance of an Indian boy taught from the cradle in warfare, as many white writers would have you believe.

Photo Courtesy McLaughlin & Co., Phoenix, Ariz.
Young Indian girl dressed in ceremonial finery.

Briefly, at this point, I would like to mention specific instances wherein the truth is at variance with the version found in the history books.

CHIEF PONTIAC fought because the English laid claim to all the land belonging to his people, without consideration or compensation of any kind. It was as simple as that.

Horror tales of Indian depredations during the Revolutionary War fail to mention the loyal Oneidas, who flatly refused to side with the British or join with the other Indians who were fighting for the British. Instead, the Oneidas many times helped and protected the colonists—and consequently, were attacked by both British and Indian forces in bloody retaliation. It is also a fact that many so-called "Indian massacres" during the Revolutionary War were committed by Tories and English soldiers dressed as Indians.

The true reason for Tecumseh's uprising against the whites was the culminating injustice perpetrated by General Harrison, after a long sequence of unjust acts. Harrison called a council of a few tribes, and by way of treaty wrung from them 3,000,000 acres of land they did not own, but which belonged to Tecumseh's tribe. Tecumseh's speech in reply to General Harrison presents his case clearly and fairly. This speech is another bit of Indian oratory which should be taught to the white children.

The Fort Dearborn "Massacre"—on the site of the present-day city of Chicago—was a fair fight brought about by broken promises on the part of the whites. The famed Indian Black Partridge helped save the lives of several whites during this battle, including that of Mrs. Helm, wife of Captain Helm, commander of the fort.

In the Black Hawk War, the Pottawattomie leader, Shobbona, prevented by sheer eloquence his people from joining the Winnebagoes in their fight against the white men. Endangering his own life, Shobbona rode throughout the state of Illinois in 1832, warning settlers of the approach of Black Hawk. There is no doubt that by his courageous action Shobbona saved hundreds of lives, yet his valiant feat is practically unknown in history.

The Black Hawk War itself was brought about by the forcible removal of Black Hawk and his people from their lands. The actual incident inciting war was the unprovoked attack by white soldiers upon Black Hawk and his party when they were going peacefully to their homes.

All these facts should be taught to white children in the schools if a truly authentic picture of the First Americans is to be presented. I ask that others of my race step forward to ask this simple justice for the Indian.

Wild Places Calling

(Continued from page 19)

There was the time that Tommie reached the point where she "just had to take a bath."

"In this melted snow water?" I yelped. "You're crazy!"

"And you're a sissy!" she countered, grinning.

Which, of course, put all the rest of the group on her side; and they jeered at my lack of courage till pride forced me to go prove that I was man enough to bathe in water as cold as any that my wife could stand.

So we King's-X'ed a pool out of sight around a sharp bend in the creek and went down and stripped on the bare rocks and plunged in.

And plunged back out again, instantly!

"I told you you were crazy!" I chattered to her when the shock and ache wore off enough for me to get my breath.

"And I told you you were a sissy!"

After that initial plunge, we were able to ease back into the water, a few inches of ourselves at a time.

I suppose you could call it a bath that we took; but if we removed any dirt

(Continued on following page)

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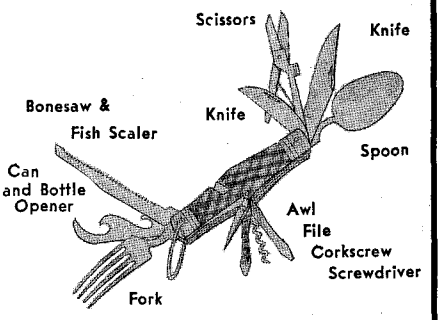

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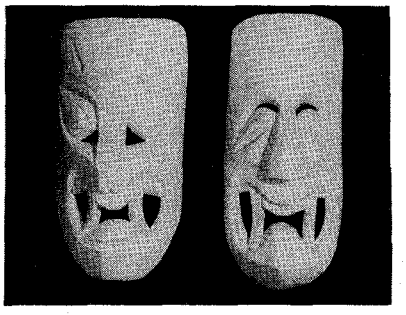

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Wild Places Calling

(Continued from preceding page)

from our cold-shrunken, goose-pimpled skin, I never did miss any of it.

* * *

THERE was the time that we gathered wild flowers for our friends Fritz and Emilie Toepperwein of Boerne, Texas.

In the mountains, we did not find the wild flowers growing as they sometimes do in Texas, in great solid masses of flaming color, blanketing hundreds of thousands of acres. Here, they were scattered, and of more delicate hues. But we found one that we know as "Queen's Wreath" thriving just as well at an elevation of 12,000 feet as it does in Texas at 1,900.

We gathered specimens of it and of Indian paintbrush and columbine and lupine and wild rose and dozens of others for which we had no name. We placed them carefully between the pages of the bound galley proof of Allen LeMay's lastest novel, *The Searchers,* which my publishers had mailed to me at Durango. We found that the book, besides being good reading, served quite well for compressing wild flowers.

* * *

There was the time we rode toward a remote fishing lake and met the Mexican sheepherder in a narrow mountain pass. He came galloping toward us, mounted on a half-broken bay horse. Directly in front of us, he set the bay down on his haunches, hauling back so hard on the bits that the animal reared, pawing the air, his bared teeth gleaming in the sun.

The Mexican leaped to the ground and began knotting his rope around the hind legs of a dead sheep.

"Que pasa, hombre?" Bousman inquired.

The man glanced around, but said nothing.

Bousman tried again, wanting to know this time what had killed the ewe. Bear, lion, or wolf? Still the Mexican refused to answer.

We rode past, our horses snorting and shying away from the scent of blood.

Then the Mexican mounted and slammed spurs into the nervous bay. Back up the trail, right through the pack-train, he charged.

Sight of the dead ewe bouncing high at the end of the Mexican's long rope, was too much for our mounts. They fell to pieces, scattering like flushed quail.

I spurred hard through the lunging scramble, trying to reach Beck, whose pinto was all but tying himself into knots.

The frightened pony leaped a fallen log. Beck's hat flew off. I expected him to follow. The hat landed on the pinto's rump. Beck reached back of the saddle, caught up his hat, clapped it back on his head, then looked proudly about to see if anybody had noticed how well he was riding.

So I swung around, trying now to reach Tommie, whose sorrel mount Honey had fallen to her knees and seemed about to go down completely.

But now my horse was stumbling and falling among the rocks; and by the time I could pull him to his feet, the Mexican was gone and the scare was over.

The Mexican and his runaway bay were dragging the dead sheep into the timber half a mile off as we began reforming on the trail. Bousman stared after him, shaking his head.

"A wild one," he commented wryly. "Some of those *bronco* wetbacks that drift in across the Mexican border to hire out as sheepherders are wilder than any wolf that ever lived."

* * *

THERE was the day that we tied up in the green bowl of a mountain meadow, almost at timberline. Up the slant to our right lay a deep bank of rotten snow, its surface a dirty gray under the coating of summer dust that had blown across it. To our left, the creek water foamed down a long, rock-littered incline to spill into a wide pool against a low growth of willows.

"I'm going to fish upstream," Paul Platter said. "And I think I should take Mike along as a partner."

I watched them take off together, an old man nearing the end of life and a young one just beginning.

I saw them start a romp in a wide patch of snow, laughing and shouting as they pelted each other with hastily-built snowballs. They moved on to a distant creek pool, where Platter took time to correct a fault in Mike's casting. Later, when they had returned, I listened to Platter's praise of how quickly Mike caught on, what a superb performance he'd done in playing and landing his trout.

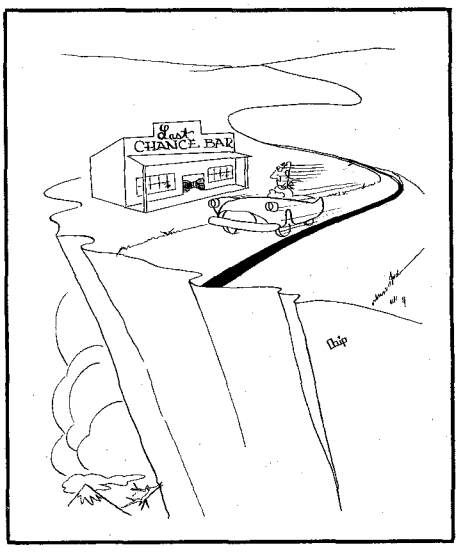
I never got a chance to find out if Platter realized what he'd done for Mike that day. At thirteen, Mike is already too much like his father—too sensitive, too proud, too stubborn, too fearful of criticism and defeat, too inclined to beat his head against the same solid walls that anybody else would go around. All of which sets him apart, making him keenly aware of his inadequacies and aloneness.

Having grown up that way, I understand all too well the misery of frustration and hurt that he brings upon himself. Yet, for the same reason, I'm unable to be of much help to him.

That's why I'll be forever grateful to Paul Platter. Whether or not his kindness was deliberate, he gave to Mike that day the warm feeling of being wanted.

* * *

We spent a week in the mountains, and for me, the only bad part was having to leave them.



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Apache Gold

(Continued from page 17)

spurred his horse. A dozen rocks came to life and sent death winging at him. But, blasting with both pistols, he fought through the ambush, taking, however, a painful flesh wound in the arm.

All night he rode hard, and shortly after dawn, the commandant's fine horse fell dead. During the day, Buck hid in a rocky crevice, nursing his wound, and watched smoke puffs rising from the signal fires of Indian lookouts, and dust streamers rising from the troops of cavalry that searched for him.

"This's getting a bit rugged," he thought. "Reckon I'll have to postpone lifting that gold till them damned redskins cool down, and the army kinda forgets about me. Right now, it'll take some doin' just to get out alive."

By craft and endurance and luck, he escaped all his pursuers and the grim desert. Reaching San Francisco, he shipped before the mast for South Africa, vowing to return someday for his fortune in gold—and return he did.

His treasure, however, in the meantime continued to lure men to their deaths. News that Hein Hoffman had reached Fort Yuma and had exchanged $12,000 in raw gold for coin before departing for Europe verified Buck's story of a large cache of gold, and started a miniature stampede.

But the Apaches remained at war, fighting like dusty red phantoms from hell to keep white men out of their country. They wiped out a dozen or more well-armed bands of prospectors before most men decided, like Dutch, that gold was no good to a dead man.

BUCK ADAMS was a fugitive for over twenty years, living in distant lands, but always dreaming of his lost hoard of gold. Then, in 1883, learning that Apache resistance was dying and that he was no longer wanted by the army, he returned to Arizona.

Getting a modest outfit together, he set out for his old diggings, moving eastward with confidence from Fort Apache. But the country, so familiar in a general way, turned tricky. Landmarks that he thought he knew, led to nothing. Patterns of sage, rock, and cactus repeated themselves endlessly—mockingly. Nowhere could he find the right combination that led to his fortune in gold and the rich mine.

His eyes grew stony and the lines in his face deepened. Twenty years, he realized, had changed the country and dimmed his memory of landmarks that, after all, he'd seen but once. Fortune had played another prank. The gold was lost!

It was a galling realization. But Buck Adams wouldn't give up. He set his jaw stubbornly and continued to search. "The gold," he thought. "is right where I left it. I'm bound to find it sooner or later."

He searched and searched—all the rest of his 93 years—well into this century. Perhaps, if you whizzed through Arizona in your car a few decades ago, you saw him, plodding across the desert with his burro. An old, old man, he was, with a long gray beard and time-bent shoulders, but still seeing, in his mind's eye, Fortune's warm golden smile, and still stubbornly refusing to believe that she had cast him aside.

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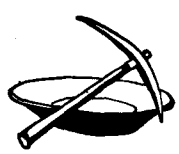

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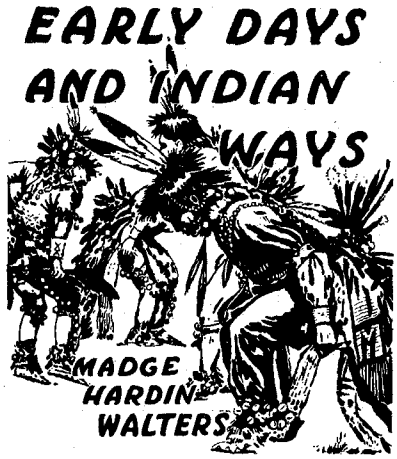

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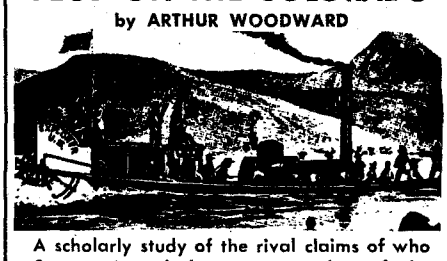

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Pioneer Mother

(Continued from page 23)

Sarah's hope of rescue deserted her when she could no longer hear the settlers. Night was near. Her last chance seemed gone, for she could walk no farther. She lay down upon the ground and almost immediately fell asleep.

Sarah awoke near daybreak, feeling stronger. Voices sounded not far away, white men's voices! Stiffly she arose from the cold, damp ground and stumbled toward the welcome sounds. Soon she reached the cabin door of Jacob Harrell. She collapsed at the door and fell against it, dazed and speechless.

Friendly hands came to her rescue, lifting her gently and carrying her into the cabin. Dimly she felt herself being placed on a bed—and thought dreamily, "I'll stay right here forever." And then, in fancy, she again heard little John calling, "Ma! Ma! Come get me."

AGAIN Sarah revived and tried to sit up. She must talk! She must tell them about John! Haltingly, with great effort, she told the Harrells what had happened, and where she had left her small son. She begged them to ride and tell the Rangers to rescue him before it was too late.

Mr. Harrell soothingly told her that Captain Tumlinson and a company of Rangers only a few moments before had ridden into their neighbor's (Reuben Hornsby) yard. Sarah insisted upon being helped to the Hornsby's home to tell Captain Tumlinson her story. Grimly the Rangers heard her out, then resaddled their tired mounts and started after the Indians. They had been looking for this prowling band of redskins all day, after learning they were in the neighborhood.

The Indians had remained in the same camping spot for the second night. Evidently the cold norther had caused them to linger where the Waller Creek bluffs partially protected them from the whistling blast.

At daybreak the following morning the Rangers attacked, taking the Indians by surprise. Most of them scattered into the brush, as they were cut off from their horses and mules. A few daring warriors tried to stampede the horses and mules and thus prevent their capture. The Rangers quickly drove them off and captured the herd.

John was found still tied to the back of a mule. Gently the Rangers lifted the little lad down, rubbed the arrested circulation back into his numbed arms and legs, and gave him food. Aside from fright, the boy was unharmed.

Sarah slept heavily after her ordeal. Drowsily, before drifting off into slumber, she wondered if the Rangers would find the Indians, or if the red marauders would escape to carry off her son into perhaps life-long captivity. She had done all she could to rescue John; the rest was in God's hands.

Toward late afternoon, Sarah was awakened by a commotion in the yard. She heard the sound of horses' feet, and men's voices. She crawled out of bed and hurried to the door to see the Rangers returning. At first she saw no sign of John, and then suddenly she saw him, held in the arms of a grinning Ranger.

Crying now with joy, she stepped from the door and held out her arms for her son. The Ranger rode up to her and placed John in her arms.

Tales of the Branding Iron

(Continued from page 25)

in Fort Worth, Texas, in the year 1884, a young cowboy named Burk Burnett won a cattle ranch in a poker game. Feeling that Lady Luck had bestowed one of her rare favors upon him, Burnett decided to show her his appreciation by adopting four sixes, "6666," as his brand; four sixes had been the hand which had won him the ranch. The lady must have appreciated his gesture, for she continued to favor him. He built his small spread into one of the largest and most important ones in the state. Later one of the most productive oil fields ever to be discovered was found on his land, and the town named for him, Burkburnett, became famous in boomtown history. Burnett's phenomenal luck, his "6666" brand, his great wealth and his offering to Lady Luck became a western legend and one of the many tales of the branding iron.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 29)

hounded white man from the beginning of time—the insatiable, burning greed and lust for gold, GOLD, GOLD! They don't care *how* they get it, or *where* they get it, or from *whom* they get it, just so long as they get it or think they *might* get it.

This whole world would be better off without gold, silver, uranium and the like. For just so long as there is a price paid for these worthless items, there will be men (?) with an insane fever hunting them, or fellow men who possess them, in order to acquire a few dollars to squander.

It is a shame that sensational writers let their imaginations get the better of them, and thus cook up lurid stories and propaganda. People with undeveloped mentalities read this inflammatory material, get stirred up, and rush to form groups of bandits to rob other men of whatever they have. The next step is to form armies to rout, destroy and loot the enemy. Finally it is nation against nation, and soon, I presume, it will be planet against planet. Remember the wise old adage from Ben Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac:* "For want of a Nail, the Shoe was lost; and for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy —and all for want of care about a Horseshoe Nail."

"NOW you tell me! Been drinking it thirty years."

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What if there is Gold in the Superstition Mountains? If it isn't doing anybody any good, it sure as hell ain't doing them any harm either!

It is about time that the readers of TRUE WEST clear their gold-blinded eyes, and just relax and figure on earning a good honest, steady living at some useful work and forget about getting rich quick. That is the trouble with Americans—they all want to get the most with the least amount of effort. And what have you got, if and when you DO gain your objective or ultimate in desires? Piles of silver, or heaps of gold are nothing but piles of intrinsically worthless metal to guard or gloat over and to count and re-count until you have worn it out just handling it. By this time you will also have worn yourself out worrying about somebody else getting away with part of your gleaming treasure.

Oh, WHEN will men come to realize that the simplest things in life are the only worth-while treasures—pure air and water, a beautiful flower, a gorgeous sunset, a graceful tree? I won't mention women in my category of treasures, because it seems that nearly all American Males (?) are already worshipping womanhood as they would a heathen idol, drooling and groveling at her feet.

If people desire gold so fiercely, why don't scientists experiment with lead until they find the alchemical secret that lops off one electron? Then you would have gold in any quantity that you want. Some day I hope that someone will uncover this lost secret—and then proceed to produce so much gold that it will be utterly useless to all mankind.

Then, at least one of the evils of so-called civilization will have been eliminated, and there will be one less cause for war and destruction and the cursed desire and struggle for power and possessions. Then, *perhaps*, Man will finally come to the terrible realization that he has not been the master of these tools of the Devil, but has been their slave. Then will Man, true Man, come to realize that the greatest possession in this universe is the possession of HIS OWN SOUL! May God speed the blessed day. —Don Grey, Jefferson City, Montana.

"The Absolute Tops"

Howdy, Gloria:

I Gannies! You folks at TRUE WEST have gone and done it ag'in! I shore didn't think thar was much room for improvement in your magazine, but I was as wrong as a tenderfoot on a Brahma bull. I've enjoyed each issue, but this one I'm a-readin' now—November-December, 1955—is the best Western magazine that ever hit the newsstands!

Them there two articles "Hickok the Hero," and the one about Henry Starr, "He Outrobbed Them All" are the absolute tops—the most comprehensive pieces of writing on those two particular men I ever read. I say this in all sincerity, and I believe I am somewhat more than a green hand at passing judgment on what constitutes good writing on Western matters. For 35 or 40 years I have been reading and collecting literature on Western subjects, and I am a bit proud of my library consisting of from six hundred to seven hundred books. I am prouder of the fact that various authors have written me for information or to verify some moot question.

(Continued on following page)

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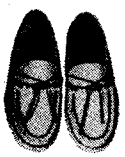

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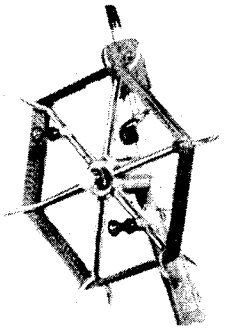

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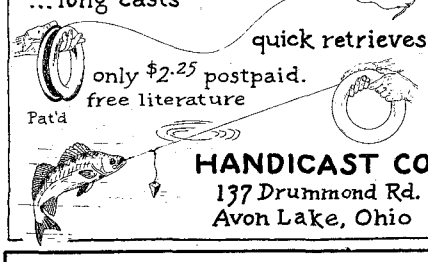

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Truly Western

(Continued from preceding page)

I am writing too much of myself in this letter, I fear. Since my accident I can no longer use the typewriter and consequently my correspondence has piled up. Recently I celebrated (?) my 73rd birthday flat on my back. Reading is just about my only diversion these days—especially my favorite subject, the old West.

Best of luck to all the staff of TRUE WEST—and especially to you and your hubby. Tell Doctor Webb I am still looking for that article he promised to write on the Palomino Horse, which I suggested to him some time ago.

Now, for this time, I really must close. Please write when you can find time. Until then, always.—"Uncle Charlie." Charles E. Bell, 2511 Eliott Avenue, Louisville, Ky.

Volume 1, Nos. 2 and 3—$3.00 Apiece!

Howdy Joe:

I've read pulps and Western magazines for years, but have never found as good and enjoyable a Western magazine as yours.

Your "Dutchman" articles are especially interesting to me, as I have done plenty of hunting for the mine since 1930. In fact, to this day I carry a .30 caliber slug burn on my left wrist, as a souvenir of the Superstitions. I got that bullet burn at almost the exact location of Dr. Ruth's old camp site—but that, as the feller says, is another story!

Right here I'd like to state—if you'll give me a line in TRULY WESTERN—that I will give $3.00 apiece for issues 2 and 3 to make my file of TRUE WEST complete. Any offers? Good luck to you, and my best wishes to a real MAN'S magazine.—J. R. Kosztla, 135 El Medio, Ventura, Calif.

Stomach Queasy, Podner? Better Skip This One!

EDITOR'S NOTE: One of the fascinating features of selecting letters for TRULY WESTERN is the fact that you never know what you'll come up with when you dive into that bulging mailsack every day. You come into the office all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, with your breakfast ridin' nice and easy in your innards—and you run into something like THIS! With the writer's permission, we're publishing this letter exactly as it came in to us. From here you're on your own—and don't say we didn't warn you!

Editor TRUE WEST:

Whatever became of Kill-a-Man Riley of the San Joaquin Valley, near Stockton, California? He had a ranch a few miles from town and worked a couple hired hands. Whenever he needed a cook, he always picked him a big fat one. He paid $100 a month and found. At the end of the month he would pay the cook off in cash, slip down the trail and waylay him, git that hundred back, draw the heart and liver, quarter the rest of the body and pack it back to the ranch.

There he would trim out the ribs for sausage, bone out the quarters and lay the meat down in a salt pork barrel. He'd save the loins for pork chops, and make soap of the fat. The bones went into a quick lime pit; and then it was time to hire a new cook to feed the last one to the hired help.

Nineteen cooks went this route. The twentieth one became suspicious, and while the men were haying, he did a little investigating of the garbage pit. He lifted the lid of the quick lime pit to find a dozen men's heads staring up at him. He became nervous (!) and didn't rest very well that night, as everybody slept in one bunkhouse including Riley. When all got to snoaring good, the new cook slipped into his clothes and sneeked tip-toe out the back way and high-tailed it for town. The next day he got the sheriff and Pausey and returned to the ranch to get Kill-a-Man Riley.

When Riley's trial came up, he confessed to murdering nineteen men and feeding them to the help and helping the help eat 'em. The judge gave him life and a day in San Quentin.

This was back in the early days. In 40 years I haven't heard any one mention Kill-a-Man Riley.—C. A. Anderson, Tonopah, Nevada.

We can understand why nobody mentioned him—in fact we're sorry we ever heard of him ourselves! But—just for the record—can anybody tell us just what DID become of Kill-a-Man Riley?

Requests for Information

Editor TRUE WEST:

I am a subscriber to TRUE WEST, and I wonder if some reader could answer this question for me: What became of the cremated remains of Wyatt Earp? Thanks.—Bernard Tarrh, Route 6, Zanesville, Ohio.

Dear Mr. Gipson:

This is rather an odd request, but here goes:

I would like to buy a Hereford calf from some rancher and run it with his herd. After fattening it up, he could sell it with his beef critters and send me my share of the profit. Please insert this letter in your TRULY WESTERN column, so that maybe a rancher will read it and drop me a line. I live and work in New York City (Brooklyn) so I can't go out West, but I sure would like to go into stock raising on a small scale on the basis I have outlined. Any information your readers can give me will be deeply appreciated.—Theodore A. Thompson, 303 Nichols Avenue, Brooklyn 8, New York.

Gentlemen:

I would appreciate it very much if you would be kind enough to print the following in your TRULY WESTERN column:

"What did I tell you, Chief—cooking out is fun!"

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A short time ago a gun came into my possession, and I would like to hear from anybody who might know of the original owner. The gun is a Colt Single Action, .38-40 caliber, with four and three-quarter inch barrel. There are notches filed on the back plate just below the base of the hammer. While cleaning the gun, I found the following note inside the grips: "R. A. Kienbarn—gave to me February 5, 1936. Four men been killed with it. Age of gun 42 years old."

Can any gun collector or student of Colt lore help me to unravel this mystery?—William J. Blake, 610-A Culpepper Circle, Carlsbad, New Mexico.

A Bouquet and a Few Suggestions

Dear Joe:

Greetings to you, and my warm wishes to you and the staff of TRUE WEST for the best year ever in 1956.

A bouquet to the staff and yourself for the consistently high editorial quality of TRUE WEST—the one magazine we can count on to present the facts, and to let all sides be heard on controversial occurrences.

I would like to make a few suggestions for TRUE WEST, as a friend and constant reader: First, that it may be printed on slick paper stock to do justice to the stories and illustrations; and second that we may sometime have an article on Charlie Russell, the greatest of Western artists.

Third suggestion: Seriously, Joe, I wonder if the Editor might consider writing an article himself, telling how a staff writer like Norman Wiltsey goes about preparing his material and checking his sources in order to insure authenticity. The more I read other magazine articles by supposedly sound authorities, the greater is my admiration for Wiltsey.

So let TRUE WEST toot its horn a little!—Tom Wright, 712 Sharp Bldg., Kansas City 6, Missouri.

Tom: Thanks! will do—all but that slick paper. There's *another* paper shortage. We're lucky to get *any*. If you don't believe me, ask your nearest printer!—Joe.

How to Make Arrow Heads

Howdy, Joe:

This is a secret that the Indians never let the Pale Face learn, and I believe that I am one of the very few who managed to learn it.

Some years ago I was depot agent and general factotum at Taos Junction, New Mexico, on the old historic "Chili Line." In our spare time, my wife and I used to hunt and dig for old Indian artifacts and succeeded in getting together a nice collection. The tourists used to drive through the Junction and ever so often one would stop at the station, admire the collection and ask to buy some of the pieces. That gave me a bright idea—why not develop a profitable side line in arrow heads? The only trouble was that we couldn't find arrow heads fast enough to keep up with the demand. I tried every way I could think of to make the durn things, but I just couldn't hit upon the secret.

During my stay at Taos Junction, I had become very well acquainted with Tony Martinez who lived in the South Pueblo in Taos. We became very good friends and I did him a favor or two. The instance I am about to relate was the result of writing Tony a letter about a job I had for him up near Vallecitos.

(Continued on following page)

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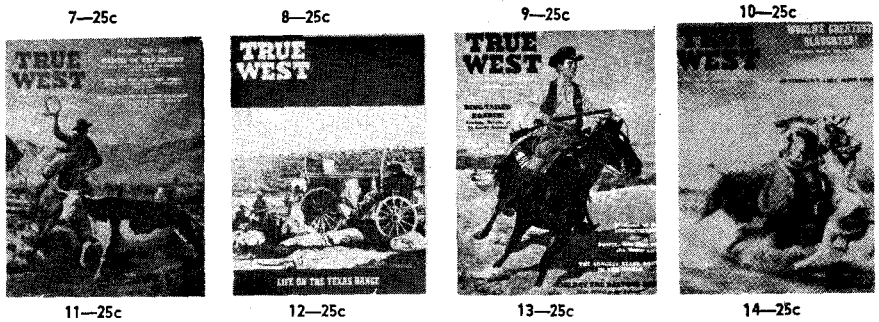

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If you want any back issues of TRUE WEST—better get them now for they are running out fast—and they can never be replaced. What we would give for a plentiful supply of No. 2 and 3 which have DONE run out.

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Truly Western

(Continued from preceding page)

The letter took a month to reach him at the Pueblo. He had received it on this particular afternoon, and instead of telephoning me about it he set out to walk the twenty-five miles from Taos.

Tony arrived about 7 P. M. and carefully explained why he had not accepted the job. The Missus cooked another supper, because Tony looked kinda gaunt after that long walk. After he had finished eating, he noticed an old Indian drum I had hanging over the fireplace and asked my wife if she would like to hear some Indian songs. Sucker that she was, she said she'd like very much to hear the songs. Tony started out singing and thumping that drum about 8 P.M., and as he warmed to his art he graduated from Indian love songs to war songs. The concert continued until about midnight, when we finally shut him up and got him to bed. The neighbors never did forgive me for that deal.

Bright and early at 5 A.M. next morning, Tony woke us up trying to fold his Army cot. I finally got him untangled from it and we all had breakfast.

After breakfast I showed him my Indian artifact collection, and we came to my prize piece—a beautiful obsidian ceremonial arrow head. Tony was very interested in the arrow head and told me the ceremonial story connected with it. Well, thinks I to myself, here is where I find out how to make those things! I asked Tony if he would tell me, and he said sure.

He told me to take a piece of flint—preferably a flat piece—and next heat an icicle red-hot and touch it to the piece of flint. The flint, he assured me gravely, would chip very easily that way and I could turn out arrow heads bing-bing-bing!

There, I have let the priceless secret out. If Tony should happen to read this, I hope he will forgive me.—Willard K. Baker, 1934 N. W. 29th Avenue, Portland 10, Oregon.

Remarkable Coincidence

Dear Editor:

After reading "The Dream that Saved Wilbarger," by J. Frank Dobie, in the August, 1955, issue of TRUE WEST, I was struck with the realization that it was the same true story of my grandfather's mother's sister's husband, who was scalped by the Indians. His name was Wilfred Barton. His wife was Virginia S. Cooke. My great-grandmother, Helen Cooke Williams, dreamed that he was still alive in the thickets on Barton's Creek. They found him there in the thickets, just as she had dreamed. He had put mud on his scalped head to keep off the flies—Mrs. Dora A. Schroeder, Box 36, Lowake, Texas.

Brickbats and Posies

Dear Joe and Fred:

Regarding that weirdie in the October, '55 TRUE WEST, entitled "Crusoe of Midway Island."

Boys, you sure hit it when you said it was an off-trail yarn! The story was good, but it did not belong in TRUE WEST. Next you will be printing "How to teach your husband to crochet in three easy lessons." Nell Murbarger is a good writer, and I have read and enjoyed her stories in other publications. Her "Ghosts of Gold and Glory" (August, 1955, TRUE WEST) was very good. But why not keep TRUE WEST just that? If Midway Island is part of the old American West, then so is Tokyo, Japan. Stories with a Mexican or Canadian locale would be all right with me—but, please, no more yarns based on a spot of land in the wide Pacific. End of gripe.

I'm a little late with my comments on the story "The Truth about the Dutchman's Lost Mine," but here goes anyway. In his article on the Mine (August, 1955, TRUE WEST) Barney says he doesn't know how to write. Well, if Barney can't write, I say let's have more stories by these oldtimers who "don't know how to write." I have all the copies of TRUE WEST from Volume 1, Number 1, and the story old Barney wrote is as good as any. At least, *I* enjoyed it.

I do have a few questions on the yarn. Barney says he helped find many missing treasure hunters. Walzer died in 1891. The first murder victim, the story states, was found in 1931. Were any persons killed or reported missing in the Superstitions in those 40 years between 1891 and 1931? Now I don't claim to be able to solve the mystery, but if nobody was killed or lost hunting the gold in those 40 years it seems logical that along in the early part of the '30's some Indian or white man started the chain of murders. He must be loco, living alone in the mountains like that, and that fact may also be accountable for his devilish cleverness. Obviously he is woodsman enough to live off the country while awaiting his chance to knock off another gold hunter. Cheerful thought for the day!

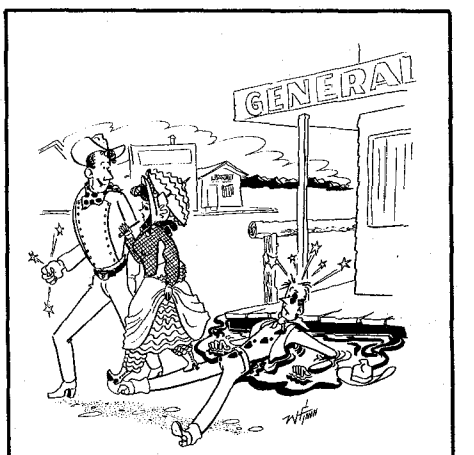
In conclusion, I say as others have said—that TW is not only the best magazine of its kind, it is the best magazine, period! But dadblame it, why do we have to wait two months between copies? Get busy and print a monthly! Best of luck to all the folks at TRUE WEST—Phil Kalderberg, Box 15, Fellows, California.

Letter of Appreciation — With One Small Kick

Dear Joe:

I consider it a real pleasure to renew my subscription to TRUE WEST, a fine little magazine.

I must add, however, that if TRUE WEST is to keep its true value as we have come to know it, it will have to remain Western U.S.A. The Midway article under recent discussion in the magazine illustrates my point perfectly. The



"Why, Henry—how gallant!"

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piece was well written, but when I open TRUE WEST I certainly don't expect to find a story of the South Seas!

In closing, may I say that the articles by Norman B. Wiltsey are the finest I've ever read anywhere in any magazine. Good luck, amigos.—N. C. Montague, Versailles, Kentucky.

OLD-TIMERS' CORRAL

Editor TRUE WEST:

I am enclosing a check for $3.25, to cover two years' subscription to TRUE WEST and also an extra copy of the December issue.

I did not know that there was such a magazine as TRUE WEST until a friend of mine sent me the December, 1955, issue. There was my picture in it—cleaning a gun in front of an old dugout in company with George Pattullo, taken by Erwin Smith. This dugout is on my ranch. Smith and Pattullo spent two weeks with me in 1908, when this photo was made.

Picture of Harry Campbell as it appeared in the December TRUE WEST.

The picture of the Matador cowboys was taken in 1884 or 1885. I have all the names of the cowboys. My father, who founded and managed the Matador Ranch, is sitting on the ground by the chuck-wagon wheel. Your December issue tells the true story of Erwin E. Smith. It was too bad that he could never make a financial success of his career as a photographer. If those pictures had been taken in these times, they would have gone over in great style. Smith and George Pattullo—who wrote stories for *The Saturday Evening Post*—spent two years on the big ranches in West Texas. They also took pictures in New Mexico, Arizona, and Old Mexico.

I am especially anxious to receive the extra copy of the December issue, as I want to send it to George Pattullo who is still living. George was a real friend to Erwin Smith, and helped him out both financially and in other ways. The two were *bueno compadres*.

I didn't intend writing at this length, but when I get to yarning about old times I don't know when to stop. I was born on the Matador Ranch in 1881, and was the first white child born in Motley County. At that time the nearest railroad was at Fort Worth. The doctor who delivered me came from Fort Griffin, a distance of 150 miles. He stayed at the ranch fifteen days before my arrival.—Harry H. Campbell, Box 507, Matador, Texas.

Gentlemen:

I often wonder how come I subscribed to TRUE WEST, as I never read any Western literature except that written by authors whom I have known personally. I have read a few good books, namely: *A Bride Goes West, Sagebrush Dentist, We Pointed Them North,* and *Reminiscences of a Ranchman.* All these are authentic Western history.

Somewhere I saw an announcement that a new magazine called TRUE WEST was to be published—a magazine that would print only TRUE articles of the West. Well, I got on your mailing list with Volume 1, Number 1, and I've stayed there ever since. In that time, articles have appeared that referred to a few men I have known. That sure makes for enjoyable reading for an old-timer.

The December, 1955, issue sure makes a man recall the past. That picture on Page 3 is mighty true to life. Big 4 hat, black bandanna, white shirt, and the slicker tied to the saddle. It could have been taken in Wyoming or Montana as well as Texas—it is that typical of ranch life in the old days. Except, of course, in that case the boy would have been wearing a vest. A couple other pictures, especially the one where the cowboy is dabbing his loop on one of the cavvy, could also have been taken in the North. Lack of a vest is the only thing that tabs it "Southwest."

I never hear the word "Matador" without thinking of Murdo Mackenzie. Murdo was general manager of the Matador spread. He had cattle strung from Texas to the Canadian line. The Matador unloaded so many cattle about 150 miles east of Rapid City, S. D., that the unloading yards came to be called Murdo Mackenzie. When a town sprung up there, it went by the same name. I believe that now the Mackenzie part has been dropped, and it is just Murdo.

All in all, those pictures taken by Erwin Smith makes a man feel like that hombre was feeling when he wrote *The Old Oaken Bucket.* Sometimes I get a notion to write an article for TRUE WEST. I start one—and then get to thinking, what does it amount to? It was all in a day's work, and who the heck will be interested? So I just throw it in the waste can. Maybe some day I *will* write a piece. Just ordinary things in the life of a cow-hand—things that might be of interest to those who never followed a cow outfit around.—Frank McGrath, Marshalltown, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

Just finished reading current issue of your excellent magazine.

You may be interested to know that I was in Coffeyville the day the Daltons met their doom. If ever a small town was in a whirl, it was Coffeyville on that day! It has always been my impression that the man who "sniped" the two Daltons was a livery stable operator named "Lehman." Certainly he was a dead shot, for every time his rifle spoke, a Dalton fell. Of course I may be mistaken as to the identity of this man. It was a long while ago—and now, at 82, my memory is somewhat treacherous.

You are publishing a great magazine. That is my opinion—and it should be

(Continued on following page)

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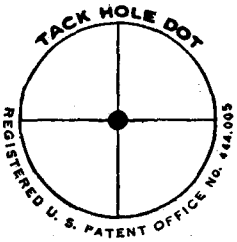

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Truly Western

(Continued from preceding page)

worth something, inasmuch as I have owned and edited fourteen newspapers —weeklies, semi-weeklies, and dailies, extending through a period of more than fifty years. Keep your good work going, and the magazine still coming—to me. —J. L. Martin, 1189 Poplar, Abilene, Texas.

Howdy, Pardner

I sure like TRUE WEST. It comes to the drugstore here, but sells out so fast it doesn't last long; therefore I am subscribing, so I'll be dead sure not to miss a single copy. My 83rd birthday is coming up August 4. I was born in Ohio, and worked in oil-fields in Texas and other parts of the West. I also carried mail between Fort Worth, Weatherford, and Mineral Wells, Texas. Have lived in Upton or Young for the last 40 years, and used to be as tough as anybody. Always packed a Colt .45 in the old days. Would like to get one now if I could buy it at a reasonable price. The real thing, not a wooden model like they try to pass off on you these days. Please excuse the bad writing, as I am crippled up with arthritis.—James W. Wilson, Box 285, Upton, Wyoming.

Attention, Authors!

To the Editor of TRUE WEST:

A year ago Mr. and Mrs. Ed Bartholomew stopped here at Shakespeare on a hunt for more true material for Mr. Bartholomew's excellent Western books. Ed told us about TRUE WEST, and said he thought we'd enjoy it. Later, he sent us some back copies. He was right—we sure do enjoy it a lot.

Nell Murbarger's "Ghosts of Gold and Glory" is very good. Anything Miss Murbarger writes is well worth reading. Her readers can rest assured that Nell has visited all the places she writes about and has the facts as nearly correct as possible. I hope she does a book on ghost towns of the West. Perhaps it will take the place of one we glanced at not long ago. A gentleman and his wife brought this book for us to see. They had paid $8.50 for it and had visited practically all the towns listed. Were they disappointed and peeved! The book didn't mention Shakespeare, but the author had moved poor old Russian Bill to Socorro and had him hanged for being a damned nuisance.

The story "One Night in Las Vegas" hasn't much truth in it, we fear. We understand Tom Horn's exploits were big only when he told about them.

And what about Pawley's story of "Buckshot" Roberts? If it is all true, why doesn't Pawley answer Mr. Rasch's questions in TRULY WESTERN?

Then there was the letter from the excited gentleman from El Paso concerning Billy the Kid's death. What's all the shooting about, anyway? Isn't the document containing the findings of the Coroner's Jury, called together after the shooting of the Kid, in the State Files at Santa Fe? A copy of this document is to be found in the book *The Death of Billy the Kid,* by John W. Poe, who was with Pat Garrett at the time of the killing. The English translation of the statement is also found in this book.

Barney Barnard's story of the Dutchman's Lost Mine is very interesting and we're sure it is true—but one thing puzzles us. How could old Jake Walzer kill 26 men without being arrested even once? Over here in New Mexico, at about the same time, they were raising a big fuss with poor Billy the Kid over two or three dead men. Even counting the twenty-one men the Kid is credited with killing, little buck-toothed Billy just ain't in the same class with Jake Walzer—and old Jake died peaceably in bed! Well, we always say Arizona is a strange state.—Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hill, Shakespeare, P. O. Box 253, Lordsburg, New Mexico.

Open Letter to "Grat Dalton"

Howdy Fred:

I was very much interested in the letter signed "Grat Dalton, Colorado Springs," that appeared in the November-December issue of TRUE WEST.

I have lived in Colorado Springs nearly two years and have never heard of a Grat Dalton residing here. From intensive research done over a period of years, I have learned that Grat Dalton, of the infamous Dalton Gang, was KILLED in the Coffeyville, Kansas, bank raid, October 5, 1892, along with Bob Dalton, Bill Powers, and Dick Broadwell.

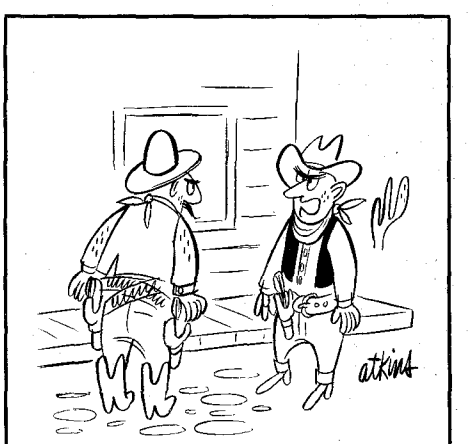
Anyone writing to a magazine will usually give his or her street address. Mr. Dalton did not. Why?

I think I know who wrote this letter. In fact, I am sure that the letter writer does not live in Colorado Springs, but close by.

I would appreciate it very much if Mr. Dalton would send his street address to TRUE WEST, to be published in your next issue. There are many residents of Colorado Springs who, like myself, would be pleased to pay Mr. Dalton a visit and have a nice, long talk with him to get the TRUE facts of the Coffeyville bank raid!

Let's not mislead TRUE WEST readers by telling them that Grat Dalton is still alive. That's like telling Texans that Sam Bass is still alive!

Is this the starting of another story similar to the one about Jesse James? I expect that there are a lot of people in Coffeyville, Kansas, today who know for a positive fact that Grat Dalton was killed there on October 5, 1892. Sure would be interesting to get some of these old-timers' reactions upon meeting this modern day "Grat Dalton."—Bill Green, 1512 North Carona, Colorado Springs, Colorado.



"So, I'm a dirty, low-down, no-good, sneakin' yellow coyote, huh? Is that a lucky guess or did someone tell yah?"

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

RANGE LIFE

Edmund Randolph's HELL AMONG THE YEARLINGS (Norton, $3.75) is a rollicking narrative of ranch life in the Tongue River country of Montana. Randolph, a young Eastern dude with money, spent the twenties there in a ranch partnership which made money. He had fun but there was some near tragedy, too. The descriptions of the ranch folks in the book are good. Randolph writes well of trips to Sheridan, Wyoming for supplies, of cabin building, of drives to and from the railroad, of community roundups and of a trip to Omaha to sell his steers. He sold out to return to the East in 1929 but his indoctrination in the ways of the West was so thorough that he returned to Montana ranch life later.

Westerner Randolph was able to recapture and record for the pleasure of his readers the wonders of the West as observed by the tenderfoot he was thirty years ago. We liked it.

Charles Wayland Towne and Edward Norris have again rung the bell with their latest book, CATTLE AND MEN (University of Oklahoma Press, $4.00).

Ever since man went gibbering about his Neanderthal cave he has depended upon the cow and her cousins for many raw materials for food, clothing, weapons and utensils. Cattle have also been dependent upon man and much of the specialization in their breeding has taken place during the era of domestication.

Cattle in the wild state were muscular, wiry and ferocious; built for running and combat rather than for milk and meat production. There were many cattle species in the primitive state but today's perfection in domestic cattle is due to selective breeding instigated by cattlemen. One of these pioneer breeders was the Englishman Robert Bakewell, 1750, who invented the statement, "Like begets like," which has remained a keystone principle for animal breeders to the present. Original cattle were stringy and slab-sided but it required the breeder's art to develop them into walking blocks of meat that modern beef animals have become.

While there is a generous account of cattle's old-world history and ancestry, most of the book deals with cattle history and development in the United States, thus making it first rate Americana.

SOUTHWEST

Arthur Woodward's FEUD ON THE COLORADO (Westernlore Press, $4.75) lays to rest most effectively any claim Lieut. Joseph C. Ives may have had to the first steamboat exploration of the upper waters of the Colorado River. Art prints for the first time the long-buried "Report of 1st Lieut. J. L. White and Party," which proves conclusively that Capt. George Alonzo Johnson preceded Ives by two months. This is a scholarly but very entertaining book and beautifully printed, as are all the books from Westernlore. It is Number IV in the Great West and Indian Series. Worth the money.

GUIDE TO THE COLORADO MOUNTAINS (Sage, $3.50). Robert M. Ormes and his associates of the Colorado Mountain Club have developed an excellent guidebook for those who want to read about and travel in Colorado's magnificent mountain ranges. There is much scientific and practical information on mountain resources as well as facts about how and where to travel in them.

There are numerous informative maps as well as excellent illustrations, of which six are in full color. The guide presents much to interest mountain climbers and there is a complete index of names of Colorado mountain summits.

FAMOUS WESTERNERS

BUFFALO BILL, KING OF THE OLD WEST (Library Publishers, $4.95) by Elizabeth Jane Leonard and Julia Cody Goodman and edited by James Williams Hoffman, has the full endorsement of the Cody Family Organization as the first complete and authoritative biography of the famous showman. Family records were available to the authors and letters from Buffalo Bill to his favorite sister, Julia, and other family correspondence are quoted.

This is a very entertaining book, particularly as it relates to the period before the organization of the Wild West Show. The treatment of the period after the show hit the road is rather skimpy, although it was through the hundreds of performances in Canada, Europe and this country that "The finest figure of a man that ever sat a steed" became a hero to thousands upon thousands on both sides of the Atlantic. Such famous artists as Rosa Bonheur and Frederic Remington painted Buffalo Bill mounted on a favorite white horse and these Old Bookaroos will never forget the thrill of his dashing picture entrance into the show arena—no, the image is there after nearly half a century!

The book contains many fine photographs from the family files, good notes, an adequate bibliography, and an index.

OVERLAND MAIL

THE BUTTERFIELD OVERLAND MAIL (Huntington Library, $4.00) is by a youthful reporter, Waterman Ormsby. The editor of The New York Herald sent him to cover the first trip of the Butterfield Overland Mail Stage to San Francisco in 1858. Ormsby was the first through passenger and his zestful account of his trip to his newspaper makes up the text of this book. Beautifully printed

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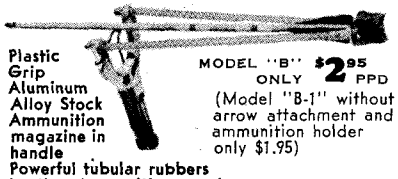

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Western Book Roundup

(Continued from preceding page)

and a definite contribution to transportation history.

OGLALA SIOUX

Will H. Spindler's TRAGEDY STRIKES AT WOUNDED KNEE (privately printed, $1.25) covers that bloody massacre of the Sioux and many more incidents in the past and present life of the Oglala Sioux. Mr. Spindler, an employee of the U. S. Indian Service for 25 years, collected accounts of the massacre from the old-timers on the Pine Ridge Reservation. From the various accounts, both Indian and white, the picture set down in this pamphlet emerged. Worthwhile.

COMING UP!

WYOMING'S PIONEER RANCHES by R. H. "Bob" Burns, A. S. Gillespie and Willing Richardson is being privately printed by the authors at $10. THE OLD BOOKAROOS got a quick look at the unbound sheets in Denver recently — the unanimous verdict was GREAT!

A BAR CROSS MAN, by W. H. Hutchinson, is based on the letters of that old defender of the underdog—that greatest cow country novelist, Eugene Manlove Rhodes. The University of Oklahoma Press will bring it out in April. It's got to be good!

PASSING OF THE PLAINSMEN

One by one, the old scouts, failing,
Into sunset still go trailing.

Covered wagons, like a vision,
Rolling over Plains Elysian,

Fade away, and leave us only
Some old-timer, white-haired, lonely!

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Emphasis on details sordid.

While the Old West passes onward,
Younger people looking dawnward!

—Rudolph N. Hill.

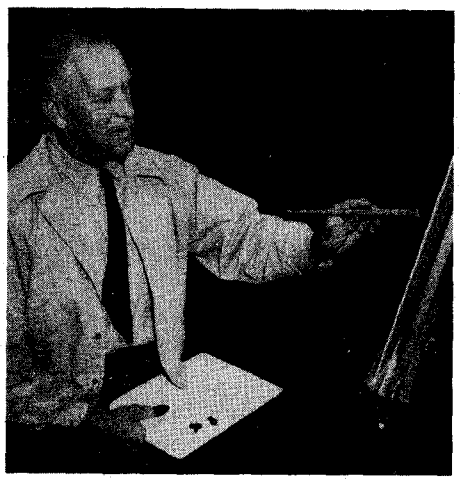
TRUE WEST SALUTES STEVE GOLEMBESKI!

On page 8 of this issue you will find an illustration drawn by Steve Golembeski, Polish-born artist and former New York newspaper illustrator and layout man, who was totally disabled by a paralytic stroke in 1922. For 34 years, in a ceaseless struggle that has become a blazing tribute to this man's indomitable courage, Steve Golembeski has fought to regain the use of his limbs and his voice and to resume a promising art career that was completely shattered at the early age of 25. The struggle continues, the goal is not yet wholly won, but Steve has not given up hope. "While I live I will keep on trying," he says simply. "The results are sometimes not all I hope for, but always I do the very best I can. No man can do more."

Here is Steve Golembeski's story, as told by himself.

"I was born in Poland in 1897, and my parents brought me to America when I was nine months old. Even as a child I was interested in drawing, and attended art school for two years after graduating from high school at Cambridge Springs, Pa. Later, after declining my father's offer of a job in his mercantile establishment, I worked in the art department of the *Boston Traveler* and the *Boston Herald* (now combined). About 1920 I went to work for the *Worcester Telegam,* and was afterward employed by the *New York Journal* as an illustrator and layout man. During this period I also did illustrations for the *New York Mirror.*

In 1922, at the age of 25, my bright new world was smashed to pieces when I was totally disabled by a paralytic stroke. After six months in the hospital I went to Maine—three hundred miles north of Portland in the North Woods. There, close to nature, I secluded myself for three years, trying to regain the use of my limbs and voice. Most of that time was spent trying to draw with my left hand, which had been less affected by the stroke than my right. I then returned to Worcester, where I spent three years at home. After losing both parents, I roamed about the country for seven or eight years.



Steve Golembeski at work.

I followed the races throughout the East; to California, to Florida and Louisiana. I was fascinated by the color and action of the world of the turf. At other times I just vagabonded from place to place, to every state in the U.S. I roamed up into Canada and south into Mexico. I did whatever work I could do to make my living, and always I tried to draw.

Finally, tiring of wandering, I came to the Southwest where I have since remained. Most of the time I have lived in Phoenix, Arizona. Here the climate, and the fact that I have been able to remain out-of-doors in all seasons, seems to have benefited me greatly. I have devoted a great deal of my time to striving to bring my faculties under better control, and am grateful for the improvement made in the use of my left hand. Of course I have never given up trying (and hoping) to make further improvement in my condition, especially in my speech. This I am doing to a certain extent, although it is very difficult to make myself understood. I have done just about everything that might conceivably better my condition. At one time I tried to do pick and shovel work, thinking perhaps I could gain better control of body muscles through hard manual labor. I still continue special exercises for this purpose.

I am a member of the Arizona Arts and Sculptors Association and the Arizona Artists' Guild, both of Phoenix. I have done water color and pencil work, and have also worked in oils and other mediums. At present my immediate hope is of getting back into commercial work —cartooning and illustrating.

As to my experiences and impressions in my travels about the country, I have not neglected my art work nor lost interest in it at any time. I have done much sketching, cartooning, illustrating, and some murals; all of which I sold practically for expense money since all my funds were exhausted early in the depression.

These past hard years have given me, I believe, a different, and I hope, a broader view, and a more tolerant attitude toward other people and their problems. If I, with what ability I might have, can help bring about a better understanding between the various classes of our people in different sections of the country, I shall be happy."

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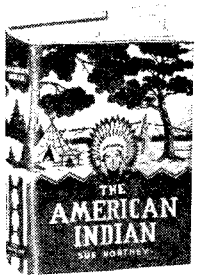

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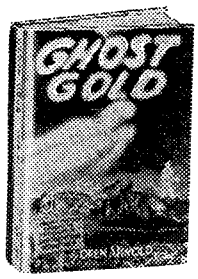

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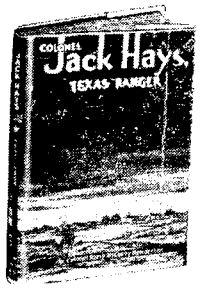

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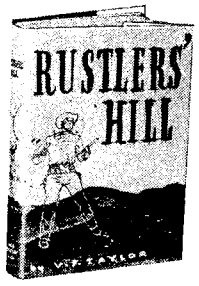

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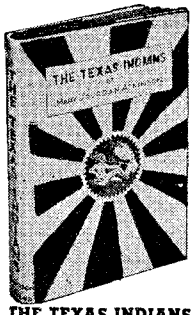

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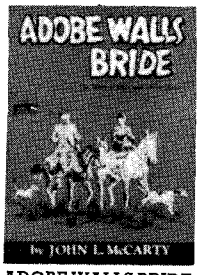

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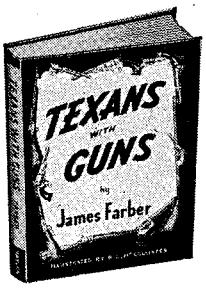

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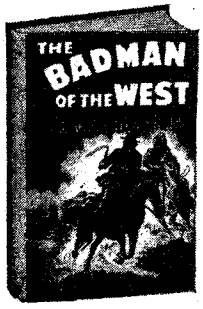

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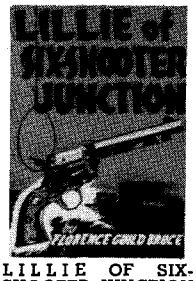

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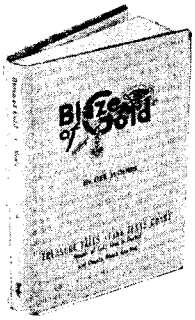

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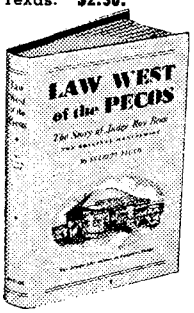

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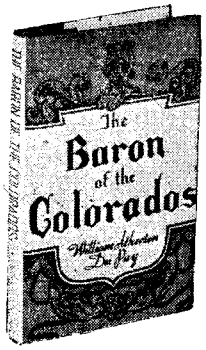

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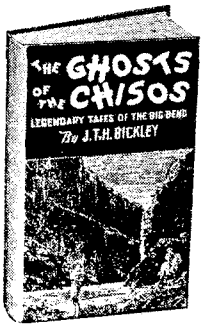

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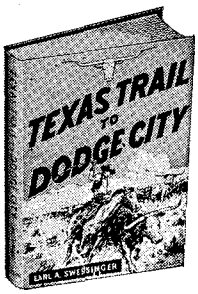

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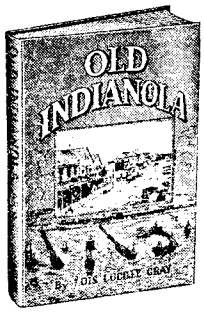

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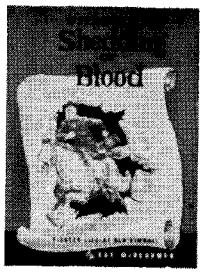

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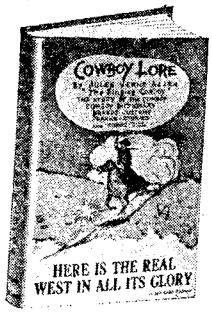

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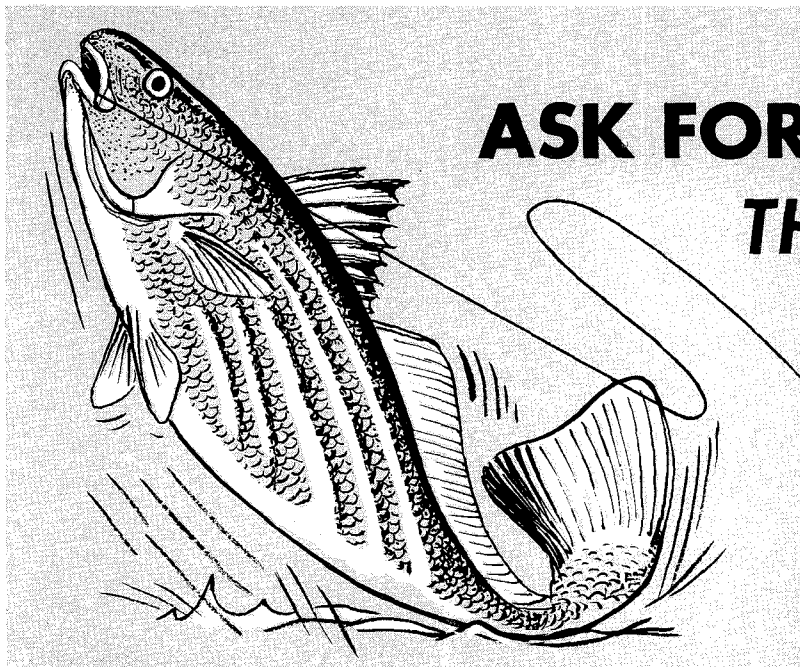

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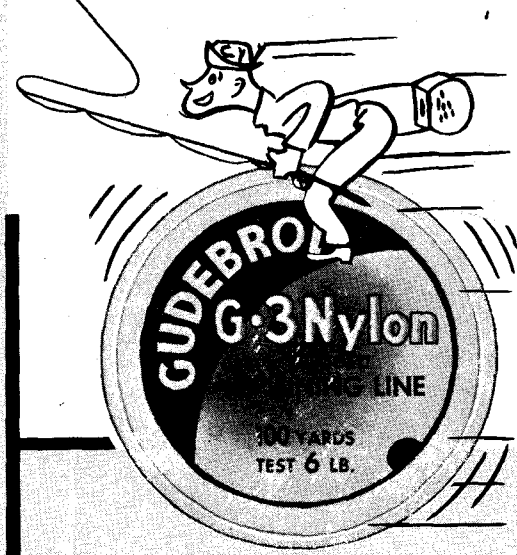

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